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**SELF-INITIATED EXPATRIATES' CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINING AND
CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES:
CASE STUDY AT ABC E-COMMERCE COMPANY, MALAYSIA**



SELVI RANJIT A/P RANJIT SINGH

MASTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES:
CASE STUDY AT ABC E-COMMERCE COMPANY, MALAYSIA**

By

SELVI RANJIT A/P RANJIT SINGH (822696)



**Thesis submitted to
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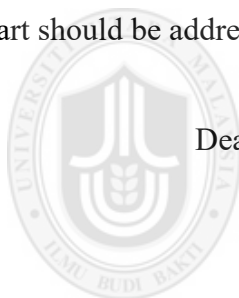
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ABSTRACT

Globalization is moving fast, and expats migrating from one country to another is familiar and expanding more quickly than before. Due to this borderless world, cross-cultural issues and training needs attention. However, there is a lack of awareness in terms of cultural issues and training provided to expatriates in Malaysia. Given that ABC E-Commerce Company consistently hires expatriates to run their day to day business, cross-cultural issues, and training should be an essential topic considered. This study examines the adjustment issues faced by self-initiated expatriates during their first six months at ABC E-Commerce Company, Kuala Lumpur, and create and propose a cross-cultural training framework for ABC E-Commerce Management. In this study, ABC E-Commerce Company was selected, and twelve (12) participants from various backgrounds, resident month/year, nationalities, and age were randomly selected. Since the author of this study works at ABC E-Commerce Company, a face to face interview was conducted with all twelve participants. Semi-structured interview questions used to get an in-depth explanation from each participant. The data was gathered from the discussion and analyzed using content analysis. The finding indicated that there are eight (8) themes obtained from the interview data. The themes analyzed from the interview data are Language, Culture and Lifestyle, Food Availability and Preferences, Expatriation Cost, Society, Cultural Etiquette, Tax and Visa Regulation, and Others. These themes are common issues faced by all twelve participants. There are thirteen (13) areas of training suggested. The areas are Culture and Demographics, Food Choices and Eating Manners, Accommodation, Communication, and Language, Tax and Visa Regulation Information, Dress Code, Transportation Information, Do's and Don't, Buddy System, Religious Place, Tour Guide, Health Care Information, and Electrical Appliances. The result of this research will be helpful to the expatriates in the ABC E-Commerce Company and within Malaysia. Future studies should focus on other regions within Malaysia and other companies.

Keywords: Self-initiated expatriates, Kuala Lumpur, Cross-cultural issues, cross-cultural training.

ABSTRAK

Globalisasi bergerak dengan pantas dan ekspatriat berpindah dari satu negara ke negara lain menjadi semakin biasa dan berkembang lebih cepat. Disebabkan perwujudan dunia tanpa sempadan, isu-isu silang budaya dan latihan silang budaya memerlukan perhatian. Walau bagaimanapun, terdapat kurang kesedaran dari segi isu-isu budaya dan latihan untuk ekspatriat di Malaysia. Memandangkan Syarikat ABC E-Dagang sentiasa menggajikan ekspatriat untuk menjalankan perniagaan harian, isu-isu penyesuaian dan kebudayaan harus menjadi topik penting dan mesti dipertimbangkan. Kertas kajian ini mengkaji isu-isu penyesuaian yang dihadapi oleh ekspatriat pada enam bulan pertama di ABC Syarikat E-Dagang, Kuala Lumpur dan mewujudkan dan mencadangkan rangka kerja latihan silang budaya untuk Pengurusan Syarikat ABC E-Dagang. Dalam kajian ini, Syarikat ABC E-Dagang telah dipilih dan dua belas (12) orang peserta dari pelbagai latar belakang, bulan atau tahun pemastautin, kewarganegaraan dan umur dipilih secara rawak. Oleh kerana pengkaji bekerja di Syarikat ABC E-Dagang, cara temu bual bersemuka dengan semua dua belas (12) responden digunakan. Soalan temu bual semi-struktur digunakan untuk mendapatkan penjelasan mendalam dari setiap responden, data dikumpulkan dari temuduga dan dianalisis menggunakan analisis kandungan. Penemuan daripada sesi temubual oleh dua belas (12) responden menunjukkan terdapat lapan (8) jenis masalah umum yang dihadapi iaitu penggunaan bahasa, Budaya dan Gaya Hidup, Pilihan Makan and Ketersedian, Kos Sara hidup Ekspatriat, Etika Budaya, Perundangan Cukai dan Visa, dan lain-lain. Terdapat tiga belas (13) bidang latihan yang dicadangkan oleh kesemua dua belas (12) responden iaitu Budaya and Demografi, Adab Makan dan Pilihan Makanan, Informasi Rumah atau Bilik Sewa, Penggunaan Bahasa, Perundangan Cukai dan Visa, Kod Pakaian, Sistem Persahabatan, Maklumat Pengangkutan, Garis Panduan Cara Hidup, Tempat Keagamaan, Agensi Pelancongan, Informasi Kesihatan dan Insurans, dan Alat Elektrik. Pengkaji berharap penemuan penyelidikan ini akan membantu para ekspatriat di Syarikat ABC E-Dagang dan di Malaysia. Kajian masa depan harus memberi tumpuan kepada kawasan-kawasan lain di Malaysia dan syarikat-syarikat lain.

Kata kunci: Ekspatriat, Kuala Lumpur, isu isu silang budaya, latihan silang budaya.

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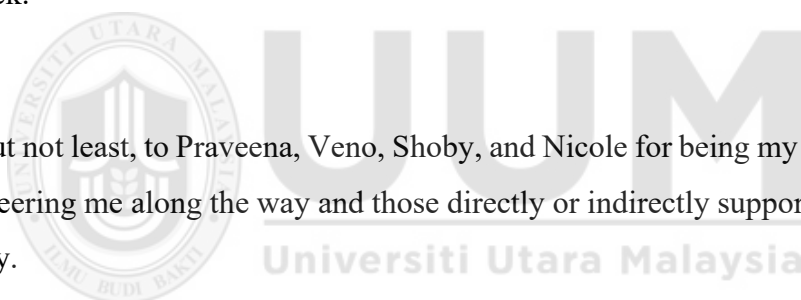


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEs	Assigned Expatriates
CCT	Cross-Cultural Training
HR	Human Resource
IHRM	International Human Resource Management
IT	Information Technology
MNCs	Multinational Corporations
PDA	Public Display Affection
RQ	Research Question
RO	Research Objectives
SIEs	Self-Initiated Expatriates



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

In this chapter, we will discuss the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, research objectives, the significance of the study, definition of key terms, the scope of the study, and chapter summary.

Globalization and economic growth contribute to hiring, which results for individuals to move either across or within the countries. Human mobility creates borderless boundaries as an individual move around to advance their career (Cao, Hirschi & Deller, 2012). There is more international work experience created (Carsten & Skogseid, 2014). This transition leads an individual to pursue global career opportunities voluntarily or assigned by the respective company or organization (Carsten & Skogseid, 2014).

Malaysia desires to be one of the extremely revenue countries by 2020 (Gulamov, 2014). Aligned with this aim, Malaysia has identified a higher need for human capital to speeds up and enables Malaysia to achieve that aim. Not only that, but competition between organizations also increases economic growth. It allows the organization to grow more globally to open to more international employment. The pace of globalization in this era and for the past few decades have resulted in increasing the mobility of skilled expatriates' employee (Cao et al., 2012).

In the world of business, it is common for a company to send an individual from one country to another for work purposes (Alshammari, 2013). This situation

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

Section A

1. In your word, what do you understand by expatriate's adjustment issues?
2. During your first six months at KL, what kind of adjustment issues did you face as an individual? Kindly elaborate on each issue faced.
3. Is there something that has made it difficult to adjust?
4. Do you have any spouse or kid(s) that moved to Malaysia together with yourself?
 - a. What kind of struggles did your spouse/children/family face to adjust to Malaysia?

Section B

1. During your first six months at KL, what kind of training or information have you received with regards to Malaysia's cross-cultural context?
 - a. Where did you obtain it?
 - b. How much did it cost you?
 - c. Was it paid under your expenditure?
2. Do you think one needs cross-cultural training to adjust? If yes, why?
3. If ABC E-Commerce Company comes up with a cross-cultural – what areas or issues should be covered to all expatriates based on your experiences and struggles?
4. Do you have anything more you would like to add on this topic?

APPENDIX B

Interview Data

Participant 1

- Interviewer : So um, thank you for saying yes for this interview session. So, I will start first. In your word, what do you understand by expatriate adjustment issues?
- Participant 1 : In my own words...
- Interviewer : In your understanding.
- Participant 1 : I feel like um, when we, we when we move...
- Interviewer : Mhm.
- Participant 1 : ...to another country, we not like local people right, um so, we have something to adapt ourselves and adapt ourselves to the like family away like, people in that country and we have to live our, ourself. Yeah. To like try, I mean try to make ourselves survive in that country.
- Interviewer : Okay. So, how many months have you been here in Malaysia?
- Participant 1 : 2 months
- Interviewer : Two months?
- Participant 1 : Yes
- Interviewer : So, in this first two months, what kind of issues have you faced so far.
- Participant 1 : Um, first things, the important things for me is food.
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 1 : Yeah food, because here, most of the food here is like um halal food
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 1 : Yeah, and I am not familiar with like some curry that people put too much on food.
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 1 : So, even like um, easy to eat, but when I came here, I feel like, it is hard for me to find like the food that I can live, I can eat
- Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : Yeah, and one thing that is Thai, kind of like um culture shock for me, um that people use hands and fingers to eat food. Yeah, first time when I went to the restaurant, maybe Indian restaurant

Interviewer : Aha

Participant 1 : And some people use a hand. And I will be like, "Oh, should I have to use my hand too." And yeah, but after that, when I, when I have like Malaysian friend, took me to the restaurant, and they change me how to eat with hand. So, yeah, I think I think like it is not too bad for me. It is easy for me now. So now I can say like, I can eat like Malaysian...

Interviewer : Yeah *laughs*

Participant 1 : Yeah *giggles* like local... yeah, it is like a new, a new experience for me.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : Yeah, and another issue maybe um, *long pause* um how to say, live, stay, stay away to the stranger.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : Yeah, because when I came here, I have a friend here, but we live in like another unit, we cannot live together, so we have to live with other people that may have there for a long before...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : ...so it hard for me to live with them, because we do not know um each other before and we have so much um, so many things too, to, to live with them like people, like how to say... this one... have their um personal life...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : Like different, different people stay together...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : ...is like, everything like mess up. Something like that. So, you do not have to do this in my house, and you do not have to do this, you do not touch my stuff, something like that...

Interviewer : Too much of rules

Participant 1 : Yeah, too much rules for me and we cannot bring the kind of food like if it is not non-halal- if it is not halal food, you cannot, you cannot... bring inside the house... cannot cook their food.. or use their stuff to cook.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : Yeah

Interviewer : So, there is a lot of rules and regulation in the current house that you are staying

Participant 1 : Yes

Interviewer : You cannot even touch anything

Participant 1 : Yeah

Interviewer : You cannot do some stuff...

Participant 1 : Yeah, but, but, but I understand it because it is like um, different culture, different place. So, yeah.

Interviewer : Okay, is there anything else you face, like besides accommodation, food, um eating manners...

Participant 1 : Um

Interviewer : How about a language?

Participant 1 : Ah, language, yeah, yeah. Um, yeah, this part is like a big part for me because in Thailand, in my country, we do not use English as our official language. We use our language, and we use Thai. So, um, yeah, I have to learn a lot how to speak with people. Maybe sometimes um the thing that I want to say, when I speak up, people might misunderstand what, what, what I am trying to say to them. Yeah, so like we have to explain, even when I speak up, I speak out, and then I have to explain more the real purpose or the real data I need to form them. Yeah, and I have to like think a lot before I speak up. Yeah, I have to think like if I say this thing to people, this is going to be good for them or not. Yeah, and whenever people talk to me, when the English come out in my head, I have to think about just a bit...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : ...and then translate in Thai, and then translate from Thai to English again

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 1 : Yeah, so tough *laughs*. Especially when people ask me a question, even like an easy question sometimes, I have to think a lot. Yeah.

Interviewer : Is that pressuring for you?

Participant 1 : Yeah, pressure, even um, on the first day, um not first day, the first month...

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 1 : ...in I Price, I like pressure straight. Then, in the meeting, sometimes, I cannot understand the whole conversation, what they were talking about. I have to think... and after the meeting,

I sometimes ask my members in the team, what like what the meeting going...

Interviewer : What they cover about...

Participant 1 : What they talk about. Yeah. The language is like a big issue for me as well.

Interviewer : And, and any other issues like um information of any taxes, or maybe information about um where you can do grocery shopping or even transport- public transportation. Do you, did you face any issues in this area?

Participant 1 : Um, yeah, transportation. Transportation. Um, yeah, I think, when like, you mean, this is easy for me to take up transportation on an all- like the general thing about transportation, right? Um...

Interviewer : Did you face any struggles...

Participant 1 : Aaaah

Interviewer : ...the first time you came here, did you know what kind of transportation take?

Participant 1 : Um, yeah, actually, honestly, I do not know anything about the transportation. Even in Thailand, I am bad, and I have like to take transportation myself.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : Yeah. So, when I came here, there are a lot like a train...

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 1 : ...train line...

Interviewer : Train, KTM...

Participant 1 : ...KTM...

Interviewer : ...Taman Putra...

Participant 1 : Yeah. MRT, KTM, LRT...

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 1 : ...KLIA Express only like that. It makes me like very confused. Yeah, but I can say that the transportation here is better than my country.

Interviewer : But it just took you a while for you to adapt?

Participant 1 : Um, yeah, like the schedule?

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 1 : Okay, I, I mostly take a train...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : ...and the schedule is like um, you know train come on time...

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 1 : ...but sometimes I feel like, if I want to go to work around, um, around 9, I have to wake up so early

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : Because I have to catch a train around 7.30 something, yeah and then maybe I came- I, I come to the office like so early, yeah.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : Maybe the schedule and... the crowd, the people. I I see like um, most of them, um, there are very crowded sometimes and most of the people all they like not to stand in line when the train comes when the door opens. People feel like *sighs* push around...

Interviewer : *Giggles* true.

Participant 1 : *Giggles* oh my God.

Interviewer : Interesting. Okay.

Participant 1 : And, the weird thing that I can see on the train like, some people like to sit down on the floor...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 1 : ...yeah, when it is crowded right. You are not standing, but they just sit on the floor, and they pretty use so much space for other people.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 1 : Yeah. Sometimes, I, I, I, used to like how to say, um, the woman that wears the long, long skirt...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 1 : ...and...

Interviewer : Yeah, yeah

Participant 1 : ...is...

Interviewer : Not to say it is too long...

Participant 1 : ...too long, and then I step on...

Interviewer : On their skirt.

Participant 1 : ...on, on...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : ...their skirt. Yeah.

Interviewer : And that is quite discomforting?

Participant 1 : Yes.

Interviewer : *Laughs* all right, okay. Um, that is quite a lot of *giggles* issues for the first two months, yeah. Moreover, um, did you obtain any kind of training before you came to Malaysia? About the culture, or get an education about the culture? Did they do anything?

Participant 1 : In, in, in Thailand?

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 1 : About the culture...

Interviewer : Did they educate you? Like, "Hey, you are moving to Malaysia, so we just want to give you some FYI information about Malaysia."

Participant 1 : Um. *long pause* The, actually, no. You mean the Tha- Thai people?

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 1 : Th- in Thailand? Actually, not too much. I searched for the information by myself, and I asked my friend since she was in Malaysia. So, I, I asked her about some tip to, some tip for staying in Malaysia, how I have to adapt myself because before I came here, I feel like, I mean scared. After all, I never work in Malaysia before.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 1 : Yeah. But I researched by myself. I, I kind of like um know a bit about Malaysia because I have- my house, my housing...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : Yeah, he is like a half...

Interviewer : Malaysian.

Participant 1 : Half Malaysian, half Thai. So, I, I learn from them, and I know how, how to say. Because people here are like mostly is Muslim, right?

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 1 : Yeah, and I learned from them like how Muslim people live, how do I have to adapt myself to them, to live like together like, get along well with each other.

Interviewer : Mhm.

Participant 1 : Yeah, so, I know Malaysia is a Muslim country, and I got a lot to adapt.

Interviewer : Okay. And um, do you feel s- um, um someone needs um, whenever someone new comes to Malaysia, they need training about the cultural thing? Do you feel they need this?

Participant 1 : Yeah, I think we need it. Um, if it is- if it possible, maybe in I Price, we can set like um training like how the foreigner lives together, how we adapt ourselves, get along with each other something like that. Exchange some culture together, and learn like um, how to live with Indian people, live with Chinese, how to live with Malaysian, because I can see in Malaysian, we have dif- different um...

Interviewer : Race?

Participant 1 : ...yeah different race, and it is kind of like diversity culture, something like that. So, if we have the training, I think it might be useful to use to exchange our experience, our culture, our language, eating manners, something like that.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 1 : Yeah.

Interviewer : So, let us assume that I Price coming up with cultural training framework. Um, what kind of issues do you think um, we should cover? UM, I will go through some of the issues you highlighted here. Um, the first one you mentioned, the food was a bit hard for you. So, what kind of information do you want us to cover for you? Would it be like where I can get the food? Or what is the- we have halal and non-halal food here, maybe you should be very cautious about you know the type of foods. What kind of information do you need us to train you on?

Participant 1 : Um, if about food, maybe the information of the restaurants were, where to get halal food...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : ...where to get non-halal, or where to get Chinese food, something like that. But um, I, you know Peach from Rocket?

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : Yeah, Peach, she is Thai, right? She is working here for one year, and she sent me a file of the list of the restaurant...

Interviewer : Interesting

Participant 1 : ...in Midvalley...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 1 : ...only. That so, if we do not know what, what we are going to eat for lunch so, we can look at that file. Yeah, maybe like, we

- can set like um, a file and send to the whole company like um, um, where to get the halal food and where to get non-halal and said the price, something like that.
- Interviewer : Okay. It is interesting.
- Participant 1 : Um, in terms of the culture, because you said eating with hands or it is bas- basically it is culture, right? Um, about culture, what kind of information do you want to know about? Because eating with the hand is very Indian, Malay kind of a thing. Um, Chinese use chopsticks.
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 1 : So, if let us say we give you information about these three races, hey we have Malaysia, we have um Indian, Chinese, Malay, um, Malay love nasi lemak, Indian like banana foods, um we eat with hands, chopsticks, fork, and spoon um, Indian has a spicy level of 'very spicy,' Chinese do not eat spicy food. Do you, do you want these kinds of information or you want something else?
- Interviewer : Um, I want to know information about why people use hands to eat food...
- Participant 1 : Okay
- Interviewer : ...or why people use chopsticks, something like that...
- Participant 1 : Okay
- Interviewer : ...so, um, people can give the information like 'If we use, we use hands, because we can taste a lot of like the taste of flavor...'
- Participant 1 : Yeah
- Interviewer : So that is why we use a hand, something like that. So, um, give the information like how it works or how it useful when we do different stuff for eating.
- Participant 1 : Okay.
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 1 : Interesting. And in terms of accommodation, um how can we, you know um, help you in provide any information on this?
- Interviewer : Um, that is I can say maybe, we can make a list of the accommodation...
- Participant 1 : Okay
- Interviewer : ...um, especially we going to move to the new office, right?
- Participant 1 : Mhm
- Interviewer : Before we are moving, maybe we can provide a list of the residence over there in Bangsar...

Participant 1 : Okay

Interviewer : ...to people in the company, so it is easy for them to, to, to find the nearest place, because nowadays, we um, typically talk about “Hey, do you going to move to the new resident, to the new place because we are going to move the office.” So um, people say like, yeah, I am looking for a new, new one. Yeah....or even website or agents....

Participant 1 : Okay. Um, language, what, what would you suggest we could improve this?

Interviewer : Um, the training session...

Participant 1 : In English?

Interviewer : ...English class...

Participant 1 : Okay

Interviewer : But, but I, I, have heard that before, back, then I Price has...

Participant 1 : Yeah

Interviewer : ...we do not have. Yeah, so it, it would be bet- it would be better, right if we um...

Participant 1 : Reinitiate it?

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 1 : Okay.

Interviewer : Bring it back again.

Participant 1 : Can. So, what happened was for the English class, is that we just finish the second- um the third batch, I think. So, we are waiting for a few months to start again with the new batch. So, we will start it again. Um, in terms of transportation, I think train schedules, so, how you want us to help you with this? Maybe, tell you an app. Like there is an app where you can track all the train schedules. Would that help? Would you want to suggest something else?

Interviewer : I think, nowadays, the application is the easiest way for us. We can use an app like to check your schedule, to check everything for transportation. Yeah.

Participant 1 : Okay. Moreover, um, yeah, I, I saw that some part you said that you want to exchange information with other expats, yeah. Um, would that make any difference if we link you with another Thai? Would that make much difference for you? Like “Hey Jane, um this is um, our, one of our employees here, she is also a Thai who is living in Malaysia.” Maybe that would make you easier for you to make a transition from Thai to Malaysia. Do you think it would have made any difference for you?

Interviewer : Um, *long pause* how to say... for example like, could you give me just one example?

Participant 1 : Okay, for example, Peach is my friend, right? She is from Thai, right? So, now, when you sign up for an offer, moving forward any new expatriate. So, we are having a Thai person coming in here, and you are here for one year. So, I am going to do you a favor here is that I am going to link both of you guys up.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 1 : So, in that way, when he or she is coming to Malaysia, sh-probably going to text you "Hey, um, how to come to... um, what transport should I take? Um, Where am I supposed to get food?" So you all like the go-to person because you are both in the same nation. Um, do you think it would help?

Interviewer : Yeah, it will help a lot for us. Yeah, because we speak like the same language, right? So, it can make like transparent too, to, to them, to the newcomers, something like that.

Participant 1 : Okay.

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 1 : All right. Um, is there anything else you want to add on?

Interviewer : About...?

Participant 1 : Anything about issues... about training, any other ideas you have.

Interviewer : *Long pause* For me now, for I Price or anything?

Participant 1 : Anything. Even I Price. Also, I am happy to hear *laughs*

Interviewer : *Laughs* Um, yeah for me now actually everything like is fine for me.

Participant 1 : Okay.

Interviewer : Yeah. Um, even the first month, is very, a bit hard for me. But now I think, yeah I, is, is better and is fine.

Participant 1 : Okay.

Interviewer : Because of some, some, something some reason we have to like take time for ourselves to yeah, adapt ourselves, yeah. We, we can, we can receive some suggestions or some advice from people and then yeah, we adapt to me.

Participant 1 : Mhm

Interviewer : And try to make it on our own. Yeah, I think it is okay...

Participant 1 : Okay.

Interviewer : ...no anything to, to, to add.

Participant 1 : All right. That is it. Thank you.

Interviewer : Welcome.



Participant 2

- Interviewer : So, thank you so much for saying yes for this um, interview. The goal is that one, what are your issues...
- Participant 2 : Mhm
- Interviewer : ...and if let us say when we come up with training, I Price comes up with training, what kind of um areas you want us to cover. So, first, in your word, um, what do you understand by expatriate's adjustment issues?
- Participant 2 : Expatriate adjustment issues... I have already read this one, and I have, and I have prepared some...
- Interviewer : Oh okay.
- Participant 2 : ...answer.
- Interviewer : Yeah, of course.
- Participant 2 : *Shows document and starts explaining* This is from my point of view.
- Interviewer : Your point of understanding?
- Participant 2 : Yeah
- Interviewer : So, how many months have you been here?
- Participant 2 : 2 months.
- Interviewer : Two months?
- Participant 2 : Yeah.
- Interviewer : So, in your first two months in KL, Malaysia, what kind of issues did you face as an individual?
- Participant 2 : Individual?
- Interviewer : Yeah, as a person. As you are coming in...
- Participant 2 : Mhm
- Interviewer : And within yourself, what kind of issues did you face?
- Participant 2 : Um, could it be like um, the regulation about the tax, this one *points at document*
- Interviewer : Okay.
- Participant 2 : Um.
- Interviewer : So when you say tax, what do you mean by that?
- Participant 2 : Um, because in my- for my case, um, is- this is not the first time that I was working as an expat in Malaysia, so I feel like the tax and visa regulation are, has been changed...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 2 : ...from 4 years ago that I already come to work for the first time.

Interviewer : Mhm.

Participant 2 : Like the, for the tax for the non-residents increase- before this is like 26?

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 2 : Now increase to 28.

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 2 : And the visa category, before this we do not have like category 2, 3 and not, not limits to, to the incumbent, like um, okay category one should have a salary from this to this for, um category two must be higher than this one. We do not have this issue...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 2 : This kind of issue before. And um for the tax is like, before this, it is not according to the year. As long as you, you like to stay here for the 180 days, um you can continue from like at the end of the year. Maybe, for- in my case, I start in September, so September until December only- already four months. And continue next year for two months is enough. 6 months already. But, now is changed to, like for this year, no, no matter like h-I, I stay four months already, but when you go to 2020, you need to like start, yeah, refresh again. Start, count as one again.

Interviewer : Mhm, okay.

Participant 2 : So, another thing is like accommodation.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 2 : Um, the accommodation is quite different from my, my country, my hometown. Here, it is tough to find like, studio room, the 1, 1 room place in KL. Um, we can find it, but it is so expensive. It is, it is unaffordable for one person. Um, so, we need to- what the solution here is that we need to share the room with local people or, or the expat. So, if we do not have any condition, we do not know any people here before, is har- it is going to be hard for us to find the accommodation, the place to stay here, as a share, a shared place. But, um, yeah, if we do not have a choice, we need to, maybe for the first six months the first year, we need to stay at the high- expensive, the high price, the expensive one first because we do not know the place to find um, I, I, I asked the local people, they can like find the place that is cheaper than us to see. However, we do not know because maybe, it is cheaper because it is far from transportation, the the the LRT one or even further away from the city. But, you need to walk a bit to the like this. I am okay with walking, but there is not any

- proper walking path for the walker. You know the road is dangerous, and it is scary to see the cars so close to me. I do not have social friends to help me settle down, so it was mhhh hard for me to find a place and settle down.
- Interviewer : Okay. Is there anything else um, issues that you faced?
- Participant 2 : I, I think the culture, the local people, um lifestyle of their way of life, um...
- Interviewer : Could you elaborate on 'the way of life'? What do you mean by that?
- Participant 2 : Um, because um, but, how, how to- okay start from- because Malaysia you have, you are the, like the, so many multi-cultural societies here, so um, we need to fast. Um like someplace for me, as a Muslim, I, I thought that some, every place here are halal...
- Interviewer : Mhm
- Participant 2 : ...but um the local people, will, will like told us that is not every restaurant that we can sit in, and sometimes it is like no pork but is not halal...
- Interviewer : Mhm
- Participant 2 : So, you need to concern this, this kind of an issue too and for the Chinese one, um, how I can say, they, they, they have their mind like um when we come to working here, if they ask the where, where you come, maybe, just only for, for Thai people, where you come from as they ask or maybe we take to grab, and we get on the Chinese people car, um, they what, what you, where you are from. So, we answer from Thailand. So, they will like the only thing that we, we work here as a Thai restaurant, Tom Yam restaurant, and it is only that. So, maybe their mindset is like this, so...
- Interviewer : Their perception of...
- Participant 2 : Yeah, their perception. Yeah yeah.
- Interviewer : Okay. How about um, language? Did you face any trouble?
- Participant 2 : Yeah yeah.
- Interviewer : I mean
- Participant 2 : Yeah yeah, the language is important because um, for, for us, they cannot recognize us as a foreigner because our, our like skin color and appearance look like Malay, Malaysian people. So, they will directly speak Bahasa to us.
- Interviewer : Oh

Participant 2 : Aha. And, oh okay after that, we can tell them oh we do not understand Bahasa, so please speak English like this.

Interviewer : Okay. And, did you face any trouble so far speaking in English to another local here?

Participant 2 : Yeah. Like um, if um, going to buy something in the small shop or like the shop selling the food beside the road, the street like this um, okay, sometimes we need to use the calculator, the translator to show them, like this one.

Interviewer : Oh, all right. Okay.

Participant 2 : But for the in the mall, it is okay. The problem just only when we go to Pasar.

Interviewer : Okay. And, was there anything else that made it even difficult for you to adjust?

Participant 2 : Um, *pause* not really. Before this, it is like, the weather as well.

Interviewer : The weather?

Participant 2 : Yeah, the weather.

Interviewer : Well, why you...?

Participant 2 : It is like quite hot *laughs*

Interviewer : *Laughs* we are quite, you know, we are neighbor country...

Participant 2 : Yeah *laughs* neighbors country, but I feel that it is hotter than my hometown.

Interviewer : Oh

Participant 2 : But um now, it is okay. Like I start to come out. Because I walk, I walk from my place, from my home to the office, so it is like I get sweater *laughs* I get tired *laughs*. So, my plan, I adjust to, like come out, get out from my home earlier, so it is okay now. In Thai, there is wind always. So we do not sweat sweat all the time.

Interviewer : Okay, all right. We will work on the weather *laughs*

Participant 2 : *Laughs*

Interviewer : So um, okay um, during your few months here, I understand that you stayed here four years ago

Participant 2 : Mhm

Interviewer : And um, did you receive, four years ago or even right now, did you receive any kind of training or information you know about the Malaysian culture?

Participant 2 : No.

Interviewer : Have you never received it?

Participant 2 : No, I learned by like my experience.

Interviewer : Okay, so you decided to venture on yourself?

Participant 2 : Yeah yeah

Interviewer : Um, is that because of your personality itself? You are someone, and you can say that 'I just want to try something new'; that is why you are not afraid? Was that because of it, or you just, how to say um...

Participant 2 : It forced us to learn

Interviewer : To learn?

Participant 2 : Yeah, it forced us to learn. If like we do not learn, so we cannot survive here.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 2 : Aha. Um, for example, um, when we have a problem in my house...

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 2 : ...just happened last week, because the water pump is not working very well, and we cannot use the water for the washing machine.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 2 : That is why, so, um, I, we cannot contact the owner. We contacted, but he did not reply to us.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 2 : So, we need to find the....what...

Interviewer : Solution.

Participant 2 : The solution by trying to ask the neighborhood something where we can find the place or people to fix this for us. Um, they are, they are helpful. They are helpful. They try to give us the contact, and we contact them, we ask our Malay friend to contact them and ask them to fix for us. So, in this kind of situation, it forces us to deal with all the people with lo- local people and even the what, the repairer that one, aha they cannot speak um English very well. But, at least they understand so, we can just body language *giggles*.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 2 : With...

Interviewer : Yeah yeah.

Participant 2 : Yeah

Interviewer : And do you feel like um, someone need cultural training when they come to Malaysia?

Participant 2 : Yeah, it is okay. Yeah

Interviewer : And um, let us say we come up with a document, or a framework, whatever it is, about cul- um cultural training, what issues and area would you like to be covered? So, let me change this a bit. Um, you have mentioned these issues here right
refers to document given

Participant 2 : Mhm

Interviewer : So, let me go through this one by one, and if let us say on top of this, you have anything in- idea, you can let me know.

Participant 2 : Mhm

Interviewer : So, in terms of tax resident and resident- non-resident, what you want me to cover? What do you expect ABC E-Commerce Company to cover?

Participant 2 : Um, you already, I think when I join I Price, I did ask this about equation about the tax one, they already they prepared like a session on this answered me about this kind of thing. But, if like you prepare the, what, maybe the guideline, or the form, the books or something to us to refer to, and after that, I need to go to find like the evidence or from the website.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 2 : ...Get the link one. Because um, *pause* my friend, my friend got the the the issue that she wants to um, what, change their, her company, change the job, but we didn't, if we hold, we are holding the category one visa, we can-, we cannot like directly change if we, our salary is not increased to 5 k...

Interviewer : 5 thousand

Participant 2 : Yeah yeah 5 thousand, we need to go back for cooling off period...

Interviewer : Yes

Participant 2 : ...something like that.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 2 : So, um we do not know about this, this kind of issue, so in her case, is lucky because she did not resign or submit the the letter yet.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 2 : So, she had still had time to rethink about this kind of thing.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 2 : But I afraid if it is in my case, I do not know this before, it is like, I lose the old job and I, instead of continuing directly to the new job, I need to go back...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 2 : Go out of Malaysia and come back again. It is like missing planning, everything.

Interviewer : Okay. So, in terms of *pause* in terms of um visa category...

Participant 2 : Mhm,

Interviewer : ...or what do you want to know about this?

Participant 2 : Um...

Interviewer : What kind of information do you want?

Participant 2 : Um, you prepare the- you- I think I Price already send it is the definition about this one, the the category one, but you miss about the changing- maybe, maybe um if we refer to the official site, the free site, that one, they, they already have the remark about this kind of thing.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 2 : So, you better, I suggest preparing the full information.

Interviewer : So, you say full information, you mean it is not just the visa application...

Participant 2 : Aha

Interviewer : ...but it is also the cha- the transfer of the company...

Participant 2 : Yeah yeah yeah, everything that might...

Interviewer : ...the dependent...

Participant 2 : ...involve to our real life.

Interviewer : Okay, so the whole- not just the situation that is applied to me, but the situation that applies to every scenario.

Participant 2 : Yeah yeah yeah.

Interviewer : And in terms of accommodation, what kind of areas of topics do you want us to cover?

Participant 2 : Accommodation...

Interviewer : Because you mentioned that it was a struggle to look for a unit, it is pricey...

Participant 2 : Aha

Interviewer : Um, would it make any difference if we send you like a landlord contacts or maybe link you to a...

Participant 2 : I got, I got this like, I got the information before I came, the landlord contacts one, but um it is like, it is like the landlord contact is still not enough for us...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 2 : Um, so you can prepare or provide more, or provide the what, *pause* the link. Normally, normal people or local people try to look, maybe um, the local people I mean, the people from other state come to stay in KL, work in KL, Malaysian people the local one, what- how, how they find their place or accommodation to stay in KL.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 2 : So, maybe we can get their style. We can... provide even more list of landlords, um the link on where we can look for accommodation, maybe iBilik or all those stuff. Um, would it make a difference if I tell you to like um okay so we are based in Midvalley so that you can look up um, housing or rooms around like um, Setiawangsa, KL Central, Brickfields, and these kinds- so, it will help you to narrow down...

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 2 : Yeah yeah.

Interviewer : So, in that way, it connects. Okay, so, in Brickfields, you are connected to LRT, which takes directly to Midvalley. Would that kind of information make much difference?

Participant 2 : Yeah, yeah, Like, a lot different.

Interviewer : Okay, and in terms of um, social, you have friends here prior, but how do you feel like maybe someone new when they come here...

Participant 2 : Mhm

Interviewer : ...how um, what kind of suggestion you want to give I Price?

Participant 2 : Um, yeah, like this one you can have like, the training for, for the expat, learning the language or culture, so in that group, they can make a friend...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 2 : ...to all the people at- within this ki- this group. Yeah, like, can guide all the people to, to meet the social group for them.

Interviewer : Okay, so...

Participant 2 : I think it is good to let to learn the local culture, the local tradition so we, we know more about how people here s- um

- stay, how people here like spend their life so that we can adjust according to the. So, if they concern about this kind of thing, we can avoid it.
- Interviewer : Yeah. Mhm. And in terms of... I cannot change anything about the weather.
- Participant 2 : *Laughs* it is okay.
- Interviewer : *Laughs* but um, on top of this, maybe do you have anything else that may be 'Hey I Price cover this...', not just in terms of company right, in terms of the lifestyle outside also.
- Participant 2 : Yeah yeah yeah.
- Interviewer : What else do you feel like um maybe we can provide information about?
- Participant 2 : Um, *long pause* maybe do you have like um, the tour...
- Interviewer : Oh, okay, good.
- Participant 2 : Providing the tour guide to the, to the place...
- Interviewer : All right
- Participant 2 : For people like the first time, come to KL. The like most popular, the famous place to ...
- Interviewer : So basically, the um, I mean ideally if you can give them a link for a tour guide...
- Participant 2 : Mhm
- Interviewer : ...then you will be able to explore KL...
- Participant 2 : Aha
- Interviewer : ...just maybe sign up for a free thing or something. Maybe that-for you, you feel it will make a difference. And maybe we have like a person we can look for at ABC E-Commerce Company that can ..mm you know guide us the new joiners to learn new stuff, food, culture, and less pressure...
- Participant 2 : Yeah
- Interviewer : Okay, all right. Is there anything that you want to add on this more?
- Participant 2 : Um, no.
- Interviewer : All right
- Participant 2 : That is enough.
- Interviewer : That is very good actually, um it is quite comprehensive.

Participant 3

- Interviewer : Thank you so much for saying yes. So, in your word, what do you understand by Expatriate Adjustment Issues?
- Participant 3 : Expatriate...
- Interviewer : Expatriate Adjustment Issues.
- Participant 3 : Umm...
- Interviewer : What do you understand?
- Participant 3 : I do not think I have ever heard this word before. But...
- Interviewer : Really?
- Participant 3 : Yeah, but I think I heard it at work, for now, I think it is when we move to a new country to work, and how it is processed, come here form home and this place.
- Interviewer : Okay. How many months have you been in Malaysia?
- Participant 3 : Um, nine months in total.
- Interviewer : Nine months. So, during these nine months, especially your first few months right, when you came to Malaysia, KL, what kind of issues did you encounter? Meaning that it could be different from Vietnam.
- Participant 3 : Yeah
- Interviewer : When you come to Malaysia, it could be an issue for you.
- Participant 3 : Yeah, so, um, I think, the first thing is probably food. Even if it is like Asian food, similar, but it is still very different from home food, especially, especially that I can see that Malaysian people do not eat that many vegetables.
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 3 : Compared to Vietnamese...
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 3 : That we have many vegetables in our daily life
- Interviewer : Aha
- Participant 3 : So I am kinda like, "Oh, I miss my vegetables."
- Interviewer : *Laughs*
- Participant 3 : I would never think that I would say that one day
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 3 : Second, it is different from here; they have transportation, public transportation.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 3 : Which is much better than home.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 3 : In Vietnam, we drive a motorbike. So, and then our public transportation probably the only bus.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 3 : It is not as um, not as many as here as well. However, in terms of transporting around, I see that there are not many walking, walking paths for walking people.

Interviewer : Hm, that is interesting.

Participant 3 : Yeah, that is a big problem for me so far, because I like walking.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 3 : So sometimes I want to walk from here to there or from here to Abdullah Hukum...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 3 : Um, they supposed to open the bridge, at KL City Mall something?

Interviewer : Yeah, for the last two years, they have not to open it.

Participant 3 : Yeah, a lot of people or me, I had to walk through the hallway, um highway...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 3 : ...to come there, which is pretty - I mean for me it is fine, but a lot of people would think it is pretty dangerous.

Interviewer : Yes, I agree. And besides transportation, food and those kinds of stuff, did you encounter in terms of language? Was that a problem here?

Participant 3 : Um, the language itself, I would not say it is that big problem, because people still can speak um English pretty okay. However, I can see that the way people speak, there is a difference as well. Cause I used to live in Ireland, so it is not a struggle for me, I think they also speak English.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 3 : But then the way they speak English is the full sentence...

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 3 : When here in Malaysia, I can see it is very focused on the keyword itself. Like just the keyword. Like for example, "tissue" something like that. If for me, I would say, "Oh, can

I, please have a tissue,” like a full sentence, but here I am just like “tissue tissue,” and they will understand and just give it to me. Or like “Is it okay if I do that?” and they will quickly “Oh yeah you can do it,” but here it is just like “can can” or “cannot,” or have or have not something like that. And its, it is very direct, in away. And its yeah, I think it is pretty interesting.

Interviewer : That is quite interesting.

Participant 3 : *Giggles* Yeah.

Interviewer : For Malaysian itself...

Participant 3 : Yeah

Interviewer : And in terms of, um, how we can say, um, what they call this, um is there any other issues that you are facing? Like lifestyle differences?

Participant 3 : Lifestyle differences... Um, I would not say so. So far, I have not to face anything...

Interviewer : Or...

Participant 3 : Not, I would not say its difficulties. It is more like a beneficial thing like people here live in a condo which would include erm gym, swimming pool and all like the facilities...

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 3 : That, it just added more. Which at home, I thought I have to pay for my gym, or it is very hard to find a good swimming pool.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 3 : When they have it here. But I think the difficulties itself is walking like I am... I like walking.

Interviewer : Yeah...

Participant 3 : Oh, also, there are not many, hmm, how to say... Um, like entertainment. The thing to do besides shopping malls.

Interviewer : *Giggles*

Participant 3 : The amount of shopping malls here is insane for me. It is like, in 10 kilometers, you can see um 20 of them. When at home, probably 2 or 3 in the city center itself. However, the mall is only for shopping and not for entertainment. Um yeah, so and then here also cause I cannot depend on public transport. I do not have a car to go around. So, it is hard to go to street food and those kinds of things. When from Vietnam, I would drive a motorbike, so it is easier to access those.

Interviewer : All right. Did you... I mean, I think you are not married yet...

Participant 3 : No no.

Interviewer : Okay, when you first came, before you first came here, did you receive any sort of training or preparation in Vietnam?

Participant 3 : Not, I, because, before I did an internship with AISEC, if you heard about the, its like a orga- like a student organization.

Interviewer : Oh yeah

Participant 3 : Yeah

Interviewer : Yeah yeah yeah.

Participant 3 : Those, yeah. Um, and they do like a small Skype um like introducing about Malaysia kind of thing.

Interviewer : Interesting

Participant 3 : But I would not say it is enough information for me, because I think it is also that the people who do the training for me, they never really live abroad to see how different it is between Malaysia and somewhere else. So, yeah, that is quite

Interviewer : And if let us say...

Participant 3 : Aha

Interviewer : ...um, do you think it is important for someone to have these kinds of training when they come in?

Participant 3 : I would say yes.

Interviewer : And if you think that is a yes, um which you said yes, um what kind of areas or issues should um...

Participant 3 : Should it be addressed?

Interviewer : Yes.

Participant 3 : Um, probably, how to act in public.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 3 : Not to act, but like because I can see here, it is influenced by religions a lot. As Muslims, it is like a bit more strict compared to Vietnam society. Cause I remember there was a story from my friend. They were the Czech Republic.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 3 : They were like a couple, and they were in a grab, and the guy was just you know um grabbed the hand of the girl. Just that. They were not doing anything. But then when they left the grab, my friend's account was blocked by the grab driver just because of their action. And yeah, but I know that sometimes in public, in like transportation and stuff there is a, a sign that like you know "no kissing"...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 3 : Those kinds of one. We understand that no holding hands sometimes kind of thing, but we would not know if we first came here.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 3 : Because it is considered as a not good in public. So yeah, that is, that is one that we want. Um, the other thing, I would not say that many, so far I, I think I judge like the- quite easy. It is not too much difference between Vietnam and Malaysia kind of thing. Um yeah...

Interviewer : Do you have any...

Participant 3 : Umm

Interviewer : Um, a suggestion so far... You highlighted that sometimes, accommodation could be a problem.

Participant 3 : Yeah

Interviewer : What do you think?

Participant 3 : Umm, perhaps providing the landlord list. There are so many landlords that you can easily contact with them. It depends. If you know where the location is, you want to stay, and you get the Landlord's number, then you can contact. But I do recognize that people here all contact itself.

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 3 : Not only for a year. Very few agents agree for six months.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 3 : So that would we keep in mind. Or sometimes people like, I got a bit problem with finding a place to stay for five months, or for like only 3 or 4 months. That would be a little bit harder.

Interviewer : So more like short term...

Participant 3 : Yeah, like the short term. And you can find a weekly, but that would be more expensive... Yeah.

: Yes

Participant 3 : ...option.

Interviewer : In terms of language, I think for you, it was not a problem.

Participant 3 : It was not a big problem for me, I think it is fun, and just being, to say how could be so direct. Like "Oh yeah can can," "cannot, "have," "have not." I guess some education on these kinds of common words would be okay...

Interviewer : *Laughs*

- Participant 3 : *Laughs* Yeah, It is a very short word. Like, “Oh, okay, okay, I will go with that if you say so.”
- Interviewer : *Laughs* And in terms of lifestyle, like the pricing differences...
- Participant 3 : Oh yes...
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 3 : For me, I... I like drinking. So alcohol is a highlight because it is so expensive, compared to home, compared to Vietnam because one beer at home is probably 3 Ringgit or two even, and here it is can be up to 10 or 15 or 20. That would be a highlight. Because of that, I know that this is a Muslim country, but I would not know they would add much tax on it.
- Interviewer : Yeah, so was tax a problem for you?
- Participant 3 : Erm, working tax, yes. I would say so because erm because I know some people they come beginning of the year would be better, but I came July. So, I have to pay tax 11 months instead of 6 months for the so that would be a little bit of a problem. I think if people know about this one earlier, they probably choose to come before that or a little bit later, so they do not have to pay that much amount of tax. It is a little bit hassle, I would say. Also, there are a few rules, to get tax like um, you have to stay on the 31st of December and 1st of January. Like for me, I have no clue like why why why why, (laughs)
- Interviewer : *Laughs*
- Participant 3 : Yeah... *giggles*. So, some information, very in-depth information about tax, and I do understand that sometimes we do have a textbook, but it is like 30 to 40 pages. Yeah, so we do not read those kinds of stuff, maybe like a simplified version. And in terms of like um, what else... um dressing, was that a problem for you, and your religious.
- Yeah yeah... Hmm, that might be. I do get a lot of look or stares on the street if I wear a little bit shorter like a skirt or you know, show my skin some kind of thing. So I cannot *giggle* have to show my rest bitch face when I go on the street just like, “Okay, do not touch me.” But rather than that, I am okay with everything with dressing and stuff, and it is just I do not like when people look at me that way. I am confused it is allowed here or not. I think information about what can or cannot wear is super useful.
- Interviewer : And in terms of religion, um I am pretty sure that in Vietnam, it has different religions.
- Participant 3 : Mhm, so
- Interviewer : ...religion like Buddhism...

Participant 3 : Yeah, Buddhism or Christian. So my family practices Buddhism.

Interviewer : Okay. Would you feel like, let us say, I am really um, very, how to say that word...

Participant 3 : Open?

Interviewer : Open, or maybe that is, that is very um prayerful and pretty much you are dedicated to your religion...

Participant 3 : Aha, um, like religious?

Interviewer : Religious yes, yeah, so do you feel that if we would have given you that information, like hey, if you want to go to the nearest um temple, there is church...

Participant 3 : Yup

Interviewer : Location... Would that thing make a difference for you...

Participant 3 : Um, yeah, I would think it is interesting cause even I do not practice Buddhism that much, then my family, but I still love going to temple and Pagoda once in a while. So, it would be nice to like, but then I think it is also a skill of people you know if people. It does not have to be provided in the beginning. However, I know that many people, for like, some Vietnamese other, they practice Christians quite often, as they go to church every Sunday kind of thing. So, I think that would be more beneficial for people to have that information.

Interviewer : So, just curious, you have friends here already?

Participant 3 : Um, not really.

Interviewer : So, it is completely new for you?

Participant 3 : Yeah

Interviewer : How did you adapt to what kind of...

Participant 3 : Um, I just talk a lot with the local people or like my colleagues um, ya, like my local colleagues, and those kinds of one. So, I get to know more about how it is, on before I came here, I also search on YouTube, those or information like sh- what should I do or what shouldn't I do in Malaysia, or some Vietnamese people they go there before, and they have some YouTube video of talking about how is it tourist in Malaysia. So, I would just adapt...

Interviewer : Maybe like, let us say, if you, let us say we provide you like a like YouTube link about Malaysia...

Participant 3 : Yeah

Interviewer : ...and give you...

Participant 3 : Yeah yeah yeah

Interviewer : ...kind of a list of do's and do not

Participant 3 : Yeah

Interviewer : Um, can I say a little bit of what Malaysian culture is all about, that you can have a little bit of info...

Participant 3 : Yeah yeah yeah

Interviewer : ...That you know, it is a very Islamic country...

Participant 3 : Mhm

Interviewer : More on dress code...

Participant 3 : Yeah yeah yeah

Interviewer : That would have given you a little bit more

Participant 3 : More, yeah. I would say, cause it gives more information about the country itself, so we have an idea on what should I prepare like um, like the first time I came, umm, I have few short with me and stuff, but if I know then, I – it is more of a Muslim country like very quite religious, I would not pack it up with me. I would bring more long dress and those kinds of one, just to be respected, for the culture itself. So, it would give let us a say idea, to packing, to have an idea what it is. Oh, one thing is the adapter. A lot of people do not recognize this. The adapter is different...

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 3 : Yeah.

Interviewer : On electronics and gadgets.

Participant 3 : Yeah, electronic thing um, an umbrella for raining, cause in Vietnam we drive a motorbike, we do not need an umbrella, we wear a raincoat.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 3 : Yeah, that is all sort of thing that I feel, "Oh, it is different."

Interviewer : The seasons.

Participant 3 : Yeah, the seasons. We also have kind of same seasons, like a dry or wet season. But if you like, cause if we drive a motorbike, so we never, we wear umbrella *giggles*. We wear a raincoat. So, I only buy my first umbrella of my life here *laughs*

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 3 : Yeah *laughs*

Interviewer : That is a legit thing.

Participant 3 : Yeah

Interviewer : Okay, is there anything else that you want to add on, on something?

Participant 3 : Umm...

Interviewer : Any, any challenges, maybe your, even your other Vietnamese friend would have encountered...

Participant 3 : Yeah, umm, not really. I would not say so. So far, I mean, some other Vietnamese... I have a friend who is coming to I Price this Friday. Um, I think you can interview him to see how it, or wait for him, um for a week.

Interviewer : No, no, no, we cannot do that.

Participant 3 : Okay, okay, yeah yeah... Or, like how we, cause in Vietnam, most of us can drive motorbikes, so, the first experience also very different here. So, I live and settle here before, so it is not a problem for me to take a bus, but for him, it is like "Oh where should I buy the card" or "Where should I get this card," because they have five different manners, or 4, something...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 3 : KTM, LRT, MRT. We did not, and I did not, in the beginning, that is why I have a problem, I did not know what the difference between these lines is. And can one card use for all, or I have to buy the different card, or where I can top up this or why KTM can only use for KTM, but TouchNGo can also use for KTM but more expensive. I think if I knew I could use one card, I would not purchase other cards.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 3 : Those kinds of things.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 3 : So yeah.

Interviewer : That is interesting.

Participant 3 : Yeah yeah.

Interviewer : Okay, that would be useful. I definitely will interview...

Participant 3 : Yeah yeah *laughs* yeah, yeah, yeah, It is, it is like, I gave him my card last night, and he drops it somewhere. He is such a *laughs*

Interviewer : *Laughs* Okay, then it is okay.

Participant 3 : *Laughs*

Interviewer : All right.

Participant 3 : So yeah.

Interviewer : So, I think it is really good. So, thank you so much. I think that is super helpful.



Participant 4

- Interviewer : So, in your own words, how do you describe cultural challenges in your own words? What do you think cultural challenges are?
- Participant 4 : Basically, I am grown up in some other culture, and then I am going to adapt to some other culture so, there might be certain differences but not too much. I had not seen too much difference specifically when I just moved from India to Malaysia, so I have not been through a big difference I can find out such. Yes, there are certain changes the way how they adapt to the festivals, how they respond, the joy, and all those things. Like they allow certain things, they do not allow that, so that is the challenge sometimes you have to adapt. So that is what I feel is about the challenge mainly to like get aware if it is acceptable or not. That is the main thing.
- Interviewer : So how long have you been in Malaysia?
- Participant 4 : About to complete two years.
- Interviewer : Two years already. So, were you aware, so when you came to Malaysia, was it because of study or was it for work?
- Participant 4 : Study.
- Interviewer : So, when you came to Malaysia, were you aware that you might be facing some of the challenges because you are from India and you coming to Malaysia?
- Participant 4 : Yes. I was having this feeling that there might be but the consultancy or maybe the person who helped me to get into further education, they briefed me quite a lot before I made a choice. So they said like they are also grown up, and they have observed the culture quite closely, so there is no big difference, but yes, there will be certain rules and regulations that you have to follow and make sure that these things are with you like climate change and all. They briefed me, but also, I did some research on Google like how is it how different they, and what is good that I can adapt there. So, not to elaborate it, but they gave me a bit overview that this is how the culture is over there.
- Interviewer : So, what kind of challenges did you face when you move to Malaysia?
- Participant 4 : As in...
- Interviewer : Like I mean, challenge you to have a lot of challenges right, it could be language, tax, traditions, dress codes, food... You know those were, this is defined as challenge right, so what challenges did you face?

- Participant 4 : So, yeah, the language was one of them when I especially like roaming locally too much but not a very big concern because I have seen that local people also are aware of English. So not completely, but parts might be I can convey it. So, I had issues with the signboards and color codes to it as well initially. When I arrived in London, I had like, oh, I am not sure about the language but based on the signboards, the color and all I try to predict it. It is fine. And then I moved here, food was okay, and there was quite similar Indian food I can get, however sometimes it was a bit difficult to find food as well of my taste, the taste is also completely different like I have observed, maybe I am not sure like the chili sauce also it is like quite sweet. So, I was like its chili sauce...so...it is supposed to be spicy, not sweet.
- Interviewer : *Laughs*
- Participant 4 : Okay, that is a different taste. I had a bit challenging with finding food, but it all the findings and all those are covered.
- Interviewer : So how long did it take for you to like-kind off adjust to...
- Participant 4 : To say that "Yes, I am perfectly settled here"?
- Interviewer : Yeah, like comfortable and thing that, not to say no longer but from 100% of challenges, I am now facing just maybe like 10% or 20% on a daily basis.
- Participant 4 : Approximately three weeks minimum, it took me.
- Interviewer : Okay.
- Participant 4 : So like the first week was quite hard because I had to relocate because of poster provided by the University was very expensive and I got to know from other people while talking to them that it is quite expensive, trust me what you are choosing. So, they will come, and like "Yeah, you can shift another one, Sir." It was difficult to find a good place where you can find all the food. Then understanding the behavior. They were like few workshops as well, like onboarding seminars conducted by the university.
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 4 : So, they explained the kind of rules, laws, and all these things to make us aware that we are students, so by mistake, we do not end up doing something which is unpermitted.
- Interviewer : Okay. So, what kind of platform or support system did you use when you adjust to Malaysia? Was it through friends or prior experience, or did you do your research? Was it like, how did it, you know, what kind of information... how did you get it, right?

- Participant 4 : It was nice basically, so I will say local help was there; through University, they had the welcome team. So, if I am uncomfortable with anything, I am not sure about the room to anything, to the university anything, I have to contact them. Then along with that, side by side, I did like Google or like, where there is... how can I find this, what this word means specifically if I am not sure? So, that was, it was mixed basically.
- Interviewer : Okay, so when you moved- because your first move was actually to college right to a university. So, did your University help you besides the agent you have? Besides that, was there anything that the University helped you with the adjustment process?
- Participant 4 : Not the part of the one session where we were informed about all the rules and regulations of Malaysia, and that was also kind of briefing, but they had a portal and like dedicated help desk. If you have any kind of query, you can just reach up to that desk and get that address, and they had a security hotline as well if in case you are stuck with any emergency with any police or whatever it is, so you can reach out to that in case of any emergency 24/7.
- Interviewer : So did the company, that was College right, that was University. Did the company I Price helped you with the adjustment process?
- Participant 4 : Very much, yes. When I receive the onboarding, it was pretty clear that what I have to follow and by what time the Visa process email and everything. The arrival, all those things, it was pretty clear that if you need any help with these things, you can get like, for example, accommodation is one of the challenges for someone relocating so those kinds of things were definitely there, so that it can be taken care of.
- Interviewer : So, what helped you to adjust yourself culturally? I mean like, you know, in out of all the medium like friends, research, or something. So what helped you?
- Participant 4 : I will say mainly people around. They will help me to like adjust to that by explaining or by like making it sure like I should give it a try at least or have a look at it by, by I attended Hari Raya, and Chinese New Year all of these functions to see like how it is and what happen in this culture. So that acceptance by the people and like respect was also there. It was like they are always helpful and never, I felt that people were like, oh, I do not care whatever you are asking for, just go away. Even I remember one incident that I was in Bukit Bintang. So, I was looking for cheaper transport. So, I was not aware that they are LRT as well and buses that you can take. So instead of that, I was like looking out a way to get a taxi or something, then I suddenly stopped someone. It was not like the person

was standing. I stopped someone on the road, and I was like, “Is there any cheaper option to commute,” and he was just said like oh just take LRT and its very cheapest. So, it was a good experience for me that people are helpful and willing to help even if they are busy up to the extent whatever possible to do that. So, I like that.

Interviewer : Did your personality help you also at the same time, because for you to even talk to someone, it has to be something of your personality? And you are making like, “okay, I need to do it.” So, did it contribute to you?

Participant 4 : I bet yeah, I will say, because you sometimes need like if you are introvert, you need the courage to build that like oh what if the person says like, oh get lost.

Interviewer : Yeah exactly *laughs*

Participant 4 : I do not care whatever you are looking for, and I am just going, let me go. So yeah and in a manner that the person understands and appreciates it. That is how it is important. So, it did help. And also, I feel at times like even if I would not have, I would just ask something he would have helped in that.

Interviewer : Okay, so is there something that adjusted a bit harder? Was it like, you know, for example, something means like, I tried asking the local people that in the local people was not helpful. But in this context, it was the other way around, right? So, is there something that made it harder for you?

Participant 4 : I do not recall such a thing.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 4 : It was a bit difficult and also like very rarely, where I found a few people may be some at stores who were not fluent in English, so, but later on when I say like “I am sorry. I did not get that,” so they will rephrase it with the possible English so that I get the main thing what they are trying to say if it is finished or whatever it is.

Interviewer : How did you wish the company would have helped you to adjust because you do know that? I mean you received the kit, you know the onboarding thing and those kinds of stuff, but is there anything that on top of that, you wished the company would have done?

Participant 4 : Company... I do not think so, but because I already adjusted.

Interviewer : It is okay. So if that is the case then, before you left Malaysia, erm India to come to Malaysia, did you receive some sort of like training, preparation, you know about, because you know, you are going to Malaysia, so “I do not think so I can get this,”

- “I do not know where to get this food” so did you did something there? Or you can just like take it in?
- Participant 4 : Yeah, just go there explore, and the agents are like, “Do not worry, it is like the very cool atmosphere there, and you will love it and the hostel you will have, going to have a lot of there where you can eat anything...”
- Interviewer : So, after you arrived, you told me you received like all those training and everything right, that your college helped you with that, not training but sessions...
- Participant 4 : Yeah, sessions
- Interviewer : And so, do you feel in your personal opinion if this is the first time you are coming to a country, do you think somebody needs training, cultural, cross-cultural training? Do you think it is important?
- Participant 4 : It is beneficial. Not exactly a training but having some original material either a guide or a short video or a briefing kind of the, because I do not think more people will be willing to attend a strict training kind of like a whole day or kind of thing. So...
- Interviewer : So, let us say I Price comes up with a handbook. A handbook of cultural information, what do you wish that in that handbook should have for you?
- Participant 4 : For Malaysia...?
- Interviewer : For the Malaysian context.
- Participant 4 : Starting with the do's and do not, that main important than, any references on how they can deal with the language barrier that will be helpful for expatriates because that is one of not a big, but one of the concerns people do face at times. And some contact details where they can reach out for like some good information on emergency cases, where to reach and a good defined like structure on whom to approach and what kind of situation... kind of FAQs will be much good.
- Interviewer : Okay, do you have anything you like to add?
- Participant 4 : Not really, it is quite good.
- Interviewer : Is it quite good?
- Participant 4 : Yeah, understanding this is like a very foundation step I say to have a happy experience in a different country.
- Interviewer : Yeah.
- Participant 4 : If it is like a job perspective or whatever it is, anyone travels into another country's good perspective to go for. So, if you come up with something like designing an app or something....

Interviewer : Yeah. *giggles* I know right.
Participant 4 : Then there is a...
Interviewer : Okay, that was good, actually, so...



Participant 5

- Interviewer : So, thank you so much, Participant 5, for saying yes. Okay. So, the first question is actually in your definition, what do you understand cross-cultural issues?
- Participant 5 : Racist.
- Interviewer : Racist.
- Participant 5 : Yes.
- Interviewer : So, you feel like a racist is an issue for you. That means like when you say the issue, that is one of the topics that come in to...
- Participant 5 : Yeah, yeah.
- Interviewer : Okay. So, when you moved in from Vietnam right, come to Malaysia, the first time when you got a job offer from I price and this kind of thing, were you aware that you are going to face issues like this when you move to Malaysia?
- Participant 5 : Actually, not at all because I felt because I always thought that I Price um found it in Southeast Asia, so it should have bear the Southeast Asian culture or something like that.
- Interviewer : Okay.
- Participant 5 : Yeah.
- Interviewer : So now, coming to reality, when you first move from Vietnam to Malaysia, was there any cultural issue you faced? It could be... you know, looking at the context you have language, you have culture, you have a dress code, traditions... All this is an issue sometimes, right? Ethics, you know, how you eat in your hand and fork and spoons and everything. So those kinds of things, right? So, were there any cultural issues that you faced when you move to Malaysia?
- Participant 5 : In Malaysia, yes, but I price no. So...
- Interviewer : So, in Malaysia?
- Participant 5 : Yeah, so in reality, actually I did have a very big problem just a few weeks ago.
- Interviewer : Okay.
- Participant 5 : Because we are like...
- Interviewer : Despite you were here for two years already? *Laughs*
- Participant 5 : Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. *Laughs* Just few weeks ago, I had something like PDA...
- Interviewer : Okay

Participant 5 : With my boyfriend in LRT

Interviewer : Right

Participant 5 : And then there was a woman. She was Malay.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 5 : And she kept swearing at us in Malay, and she was swearing at us for like 10 minutes long until... Okay, when she was swearing at us because we did not understand the Malay.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 5 : So, we did not, so we did not feel like we were being... were...

Interviewer : Like you felt that was like something bad.

Participant 5 : Yeah, and then only after that she was approaching us to our... in front of us and then she was swearing to our face. Yeah, so only after we knew that, oh, she was swearing at us because we were showing some PDA.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 5 : And it only after that there was a Chinese guy, he, he approached her and then calmed her down something like that, but she, she still, she continued erm swearing at us. So, I felt quite bad.

Interviewer : Okay. So, that was like something recent. Before that, when you first came in, was there anything else that you felt like issues that you felt like it was a struggle for you... So hard for you to even be in Malaysia, you feel like you want to go back home...

Participant 5 : *Laughs*

Interviewer : Like "I am homesick, I want to go back to Vietnam" *Laughs*

Participant 5 : No, no-no. Not at all.

Interviewer : Not at all?

Participant 5 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay, so how long... You know you mentioned that you faced this like three weeks ago, right? So how long did it take for you to overcome it?

Participant 5 : It took me two days, and until now, we start having is that having like we, we start... How to say... We start paying attention to what we do like, and what we show PDA to each other, something like that.

Interviewer : Okay. So, was it okay when you do this in Vietnam?

Participant 5 : Yes, of course.

Interviewer : Was it fine?

Participant 5 : Yeah yeah, it is totally fine.

Interviewer : And nobody even bothers?

Participant 5 : No no.

Interviewer : Okay, so you do not have a spouse and kids. I am going to skip that. So now, when you move to Malaysia, right, so what was the support system that you use to Malaysia? That means, was it through friends, was it through experience, or research, or was it like something out of the box, right? What was it that made you, to like... when you come to Malaysia, okay, we need to find a place to stay, we need to... So how did you get all this kind of information?

Participant 5 : I Google all of it myself. *Laughs*

Interviewer : You Google everything by yourself?

Participant 5 : *Laughs*

Interviewer : So, even your family, like your mum, dad, your sisters, your brothers did not even like, you know, help you in that transition*...

Participant 5 : No.

Interviewer : So, you did everything on yourself?

Participant 5 : Yes.

Interviewer : You find your accommodations, information, plane, the budget...

Participant 5 : Yes.

Interviewer : Wow.

Participant 5 : Yeah, only until I got along with my ex-colleagues like my former colleagues. I started asking them things like where should I eat, where should I go...

Interviewer : So, were your colleagues local, or?

Participant 5 : Yeah. My colleagues were local.

Interviewer : Okay. So, did- was, was a local much helpful for you.

Participant 5 : Yes, they showed me pretty good restaurants, yeah...

Interviewer : That is nice. So, did you get any Vietnamese friends when you came here? And what was it like, did you feel like a homesick when you came in here, or like you are the only (inaudible) Vietnamese, but you know, being the only person, like you came here alone. You did not come with your friends or family. So, you came in alone. So, did you feel like you need that urge of "I need to get another Vietnamese, so I feel I am comfortable"? Was it that was it like your personality, or was it just like, you

know, sometimes your personality can just make you feel like “I am flexible.”

Participant 5 : Yeah, it is more like that.

Interviewer : A personality thing.

Participant 5 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. All right, that is good. So, did- so when you moved to Malaysia, was I price your first company?

Participant 5 : No, I price was the second.

Interviewer : Second. So, when you moved in, it was another company?

Participant 5 : Yeah yes.

Interviewer : So when did the company helped you to adjust... when you move from Vietnam to Malaysia, did they provide you any support, any information?

Participant 5 : Yeah, because it was a very small company. So, my boss was the one who, who drove me around to show me this restaurant, that restaurant and all. He is a Malaysian Chinese.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 5 : Yeah, and he, he, he supported me whenever I needed him or something like that.

Interviewer : All right, that is good.

Participant 5 : Yeah. 

Interviewer : So, did they give you any training back in that company?

Participant 5 : No. It is just a very...

Interviewer : Informal?

Participant 5 : Informal yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. So was there something that made it... An issue that made it hard for you to adjust?

Participant 5 : Hard to adjust... To the culture?

Interviewer : Yeah, the culture. To Malaysian culture.

Participant 5 : *Long pause* No.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 5 : But there is the thing that it always makes me more cautious when it comes to Muslim people.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 5 : I tend not to... Okay, so whenever... even till now, whenever I take away pork dish, I tend to, I tend to not like being like conscious of my...

Interviewer : Surrounding.

Participant 5 : Yeah. I do not want to let it touch the Muslim people or something like that.

Interviewer : Wow. Okay. That is very thoughtful actually *laughs* So your company did help you to... did they help you to... like you told me, your boss brought you around and made you feel better... and did you wish that the company could have done a little bit more than that? Is there something that you wish for, or you feel that whatever they have given to you is just nice?

Participant 5 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Was it just comfortable?

Participant 5 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay, so if let us say you are about to move, assuming your first time to Malaysia, how long in prior do you wish to receive all this information?

Participant 5 : 1 month.

Interviewer : One month? So, because it gives you enough time to adjust to information...?

Participant 5 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. So, before you left Vietnam, did you receive any kind of training, preparation, you know about Malaysian culture, language?

Participant 5 : No.

Interviewer : So how did you know about Malaysian culture and language?

Participant 5 : I did research.

Interviewer : You did the research?

Participant 5 : Yeah yeah, like how is life in Malaysia. Yeah, that is how I search. *laughs*

Interviewer : *Laughs* Pretty much it cost to internet usage and I am pretty sure you pay that in your monthly bill. Okay. So now after you arrived in Malaysia, you know you told your company, your boss helped you right. Did you receive anything else? That means besides the company. Maybe you looked for a different sauce and kind of training like language or whatsoever. Did you receive anything like that?

Participant 5 : No.

Interviewer : So, it did not cost anything. In I Price, did you receive anything else that, like extra training for you or some kind of things that helped you with a cultural perspective?

Participant 5 : Culture perspective... Training about Culture perspective... I think I explored different states in Malaysia through Strategy Weekend, and it did help me and provided me some cultural knowledge.

Interviewer : Ah okay.

Participant 5 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Then you look at it. Okay. So, do you feel language was a problem for you when you first moved to Malaysia?

Participant 5 : Yeah, a little bit.

Interviewer : A little bit. So how did you tackle that?

Participant 5 : Sometimes just by gestures, something like that. Because some Malay cannot speak English. So, I need to repeat multiple times, and it is quite difficult to understand what they talk about.

Interviewer : hmmm.

Participant 5 : Yeah.

Interviewer : So, you just look at the gestures, where they are pointing at, and then you take it up from that.

Participant 5 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Was it...how long was the struggle for you? I mean, are you still struggling? It has been two years. So, are you still struggling?

Participant 5 : Yea, it still happens.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 5 : Yeah

Interviewer : But when the first time you move in, it was hard for you because the language was still a barrier for you?

Participant 5 : Oh, no. When I first moved here to Malaysia, I was quite surprised that most of the people that I met, yeah, they knew English, even a little bit.

Interviewer : All right. So that helped you because of your English also... you kind of knew how to speak English.

Participant 5 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. So now in your ex-... in your own opinion, you know that I Price to a bit of program, right? You know, when somebody joins in, you give them like a PDF file for accommodations, and before you come in one week where you can get your shopping groceries and those kinds of stuff... Do you feel that ABC E-

Commerce Company should provide training like maybe like, you know sometimes some people are just moving to Malaysia for the first time or are the first time for them even to leave their home country? Do you feel that I Price should kind of pay close attention to them by giving them training about you know the culture here, the do's, and do not in Malaysia? Do you think it is a need?

Participant 5 : Yes.

Interviewer : Yes? Why do you say 'yes'?

Participant 5 : Because based on my experience, I did struggle with that. Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay, what kind of area do you wish they covered?

Participant 5 : Yeah. I wish somebody could have told me the do's and do not. Maybe like, you know the... being in a Malaysian context, PDA, of course, is like some places... Not some places, most places it is not acceptable. *laughs*. Like "hey, you are not supposed to like French kiss in public"... you know, and then like if you knew that, then it kind of like... you would have been cautious.

Interviewer : It would have been helpful for you, you felt...

Participant 5 : Yeah, yes.

Interviewer : Okay. All right, I think that is about it. Do you have anything you would like to add to this topic?

Participant 5 : Another thing, maybe some prior knowledge on how to communicate or talk to the locals here or some tips on how to communicate to the locals. That would be helpful. Perhaps we could use hand gestures or point at something.

Interviewer : Oh, that interesting, is there anything else?

Participant 5 : No *Laughs*

Interviewer : Okay, but it was good, that was good actually, so I received much information from you especially. So, thanks to Participant 5.

Participant 6

- Interviewer : Okay, so um, thank you for saying yes.
- Participant 6 : Okay
- Interviewer : It is very nice of you to say yes. I hope that you have managed to go through the list of questions. So, in your own words, what do you understand by expatriate adjustment issues?
- Participant 6 : Um okay. So, I think, cause we have like in, we have different um, closure. Um, it is like we will be able to be respectful of each culture based on where you live like for example, I, I um, well my country is the Philippines we are mostly Christians there, are Catholic, and going to um, Muslim, I guess um, um much really, it is a different um experience for me. It is a different um, and I guess adjustment as well. So, I think it is also im- it is, it is important um like knowledge for, for some schooling to um, like, what do you call this, training expats to experience different cultures, especially culture in Malaysia.
- Interviewer : Okay.
- Participant 6 : I think its important um find knowledge and adjustment issues to everyone, cause um, yeah, like how you are going to be respectful with each other.
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 6 : Okay.
- Interviewer : Just curious, how, how many months have been here already?
- Participant 6 : Two months.
- Interviewer : Two months? Okay
- Participant 6 : Yes.
- Interviewer : So, during your first month, what kind of um, issues you have?
- Participant 6 : I, I guess, like, um, one of the few things that I asked my teammates um, during my, um first few weeks here was like, what are the things that I should be aware of. Like um, what are the things that um are offensive, um for people is here, and for example, I have um, for- um, like, for example, the pork and stuff, yeah. It is pretty like common for us to have it here- um to have it, to have it in my home country. But then when I move here, it is like um, I am not supposed to eat this in public, you know, because I have a friend who is um, Muslim and they do not eat it pork and... It is hard to find pork here, and apparently, you cannot purchase pork in all the places.
- Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 6 : So, those things like, I have to like know what are- um things that are offensive and um things that um I have to adjust.

Interviewer : So, the main struggle, can I say was, one of them was the food?

Participant 6 : Yes.

Interviewer : Cause the type of food that was so different compared to your home country?

Participant 6 : Yeah

Interviewer : Um, is there anything that made it even difficult to adjust?

Participant 6 : Um, well not really because, um I mean, food is, I mean, there is still another type of meat. It is just that, um, in the Malay- um in the Philippines, it is really common. Like everywhere you go, it is like meat meat meat, pork pork pork.

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 6 : So, it was, I mean, it is it sounds like a minor thing, but it is kind of like I- like you miss this, this, cause it is like the constant thing...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 6 : ...and you knew that, and I have to have, every day you eat pork. Yeah, it was one of the main struggles. It likes a minor thing
giggles

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 6 : I mean, you are just going to, you are trying to say things like this is like so so petty like um yeah.

Interviewer : Did you face anything other than food?

Participant 6 : Transportation. I, I, um, to be honest, it is like, it is so good. I love adjusting to this type of transportation cause it is really efficient um, again like, referring to Manila, it is um it ha-less-um- there is a transportation crisis at the moment, um and, and here it is like, you have, so- there is a thing that it is a good adjustment because, cause that is what I am saying, um like I told my friend that in here I have so much time.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 6 : Like before, like I would spend five hours, I guess on the road. Um, 2 hours just to go to the office, um 3 hours to go home and it is like um 18 kilometer um...

Interviewer : Oh

Participant 6 : ...distance. So here, it is like I have like so much time, like what I want to do with my extra time. It is a good adjustment, to be honest. It is, it is, it is great, it is um, also like I have more time for my- for something I am passionate about, that I have more

time to do my fashion project like I can go out um, and then be there on time. It is like those stuff; it is, it is minor, but it is so much um e- um easier here rather than in where I am from.

Interviewer : Mhm.

Participant 6 : So, I did not face um any difficulties yet, um, but I did face a little bit in language...

Interviewer : What about the language?

Participant 6 : Yes, language is, well, I think it is with I Price, everyone like speaks English and, and they adjust, if you know, for example, Indonesians, I have, I guess Indonesian whenever they talk um in front of me, um they would not talk in their native language. They would talk in English, which is good. Sometimes you feel like um you are, you are, um maybe they talk about you, that stuff, but yeah, I think ABC E-Commerce Company is really, ABC E-Commerce Company people have, have got to be respectful of, of, of the language barrier, you know, we have. And also, if they like to talk in Indo native, they will explain it to me right away. So, it is really um, not a, not an issue for me. But outside, um, outside work, there is, um to be honest like, um, sometimes if you know, like I get phone calls from grab and like, I sometimes, I had to repeat um some of the things that they said, it is um I am still not used to, I mean it is my second month, but I am still not used to their um their language and their accent. So, um, I face those, um well not every day, but um yeah, it is like difficult sometimes to decide, their word and what their, what they are trying to say. It is um, yeah, um, every time their accent is thick, but yeah, there is, I need to adjust more on that as well.

Interviewer : And in terms of like um, for example, um coming to a new country, do you feel issues like um, family? Was that like a problem?

Participant 6 : Ah, I have a friend here um already when I work, um, but yeah, I miss my family. I miss my parents and my dogs *laughs* so yeah. Yeah, it is a...

Participant 6 : ...like, as I talk to them like every day, um, it is just not facing to face but it still, it is good communication with them. I have constant communication with them, so, yeah.

Interviewer : And when you first came here, what kind of training did you receive any training in your home country?

Participant 6 : Um, yes, um, but then it was focused... yeah during like um deployment training process, um they would give us um, like, um, before this, pre-departure orientation, but then it was focused for, um, it was so bad. It was focused on, um KSA, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They did not, they focused on um,

for example, I am going to Malaysia, why are they giving me orientation about KSA.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 6 : So, yeah, I do not know...

Interviewer : So, there was training, but it was very narrowed down to a specific country?

Participant 6 : Yes. It was like, and it was um, it was general, but then there were um, but both of it was like super into KSA, it is like, it didn't um, it did not give me much um info about where I am going into. Or where I am moving into.

Interviewer : And did you feel that you know, given here, you are here for two months. Do you think it is important for someone to have the training, cultural training...

Participant 6 : Yes

Interviewer : ...for them to adjust?

Participant 6 : Yes

Interviewer : And if let us say I Price, we do a training, let us say we cover training for you, work, just for cultural um stuff right. Um, what kind of issues or areas do you think we should cover?

Participant 6 : Yeah, okay, so, for me, religion. Um, it is, it is one of the um the things that I want to know, like the official um, like stance and stuff.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 6 : Um, just before, I just want a lecture it is you, that before I am here, maybe this um, emp- um, employ- um maybe this company, they would like, they when they find out I was moving to Malaysia, it is like 'Hey um be careful on um, something it is like quite um, they are quite strict. O like, okay, um like more religious ideas, so, because I was like really, really *giggles* cause I am a, um yeah...

Interviewer : It scares you, and you are not sure about what environment you are...

Participant 6 : Yeah

Interviewer : ...coming into.

Participant 6 : Yes. So, I got that um, not just 1, like a lot, and the other person was Australian who used to work here. Um, so, I was like, okay. But then when I move here, and then I asked my teammates, like um, "*You do not have to...*" (In different accent) You do not have to worry about that stuff like, okay so um I guess, they, they have um, I guess Malaysia it is like a certain stereotype such as religion, culture, and political views but it is different when you

are a local versus when you are like just an expat who is um came for only a few months I guess or few years I guess. We should, if like possible, we have like a, like, I guess, a part of the boarding process it is like um...

Interviewer : So, besides religion and liberal ideas, what kind of other things that you feel we should cover?

Participant 6 : *Thinking*. Um, I guess, um I think I Price it is different. They quite, liberal here and like you have, cause we are a mix of, of, um, of, of recess here and, "races" *giggles*. But then like, of course, once you are outside, it is like you are outside, what are the things that you still need to be careful about, like it is good at, um I Price is liberal- I mean like, have like, I mean... You know what I-

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 6 : Yeah, but outside um...

Interviewer : That means there are somethings to be cautious about...

Participant 6 : Yes yes.

Interviewer : And when most of the time you spend your days, you know on weekends, on holidays, spending outside...

Participant 6 : Yes yes

Interviewer : ...it is not in the company, and probably where they do not judge you or do not have um things to say about your dressing.

Participant 6 : Oh ya, exactly

Interviewer : When you eat pork here, nobody is going to be like, "Why are you eating pork here?"

Participant 6 : Yes yes

Interviewer : But it may be different outside.

Participant 6 : Yes yes

Interviewer : Okay. So. If let us say, you mentioned that one of your issues was food. Do you think like, if you were like, given like um, I would not say preference, but if like, um maybe like food option, and what the main food here, or what is our cultured food here, what we do not eat here... would not that make aa difference? Did you have any other struggle?

Participant 6 : Um, yes, actually um at first, it is like my friend was here earlier than I said, do not dress um short, um do not wear shorts, like do not wear um, just wear pants. Okay, um, but then when I went here like, oh people wear shorts. It is that, um, but then yeah um should I also be careful about that, um I mean it is okay here, but outside, um do I have to be more conservative with the way I dress? But, um, yeah... and also like.. I think, I think it differs

here, because like dressing, maybe you would go, when you, when you attend a religious um ceremony or this kind of thing, yes. You have to dress appropriately

Interviewer : Yes.

Participant 6 : I think probably educating um people like, okay we have flexible in what you dress, but hey if you are attending like ceremonies here or you are going to a prayer place then maybe yes, you need to know the dress codes that are applied to this kind of places and all.

Interviewer : Mhm.

Participant 6 : Yes, in general, when you are walking, you know, outside, you are wearing shorts, or sleeveless or whatever it is, do you feel like you are stereotyped or you feel like okay, you are comfortable just to wear this?

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 6 : And in terms of what else we have. I think the food is pretty cheap.

Interviewer : Are there any other suggestions?

Participant 6 : Um, I think if we are given like a costly/costing lifestyle, would that made a difference. Um, well, yeah would be great, because um, like I think um restaurants here, I mean, the local stuff here is good, it is cheap, but then when I buy like pork or some of the non-halal stuff like for example, beer, it is really expensive. And the pork is the expensive...and like where to get non-halal food too.....

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 6 : The average price for groceries and now we are talking about non-groceries that we are spending on.

Interviewer : Okay, is there anything else you want to add to this?

Participant 6 : Um, what else. I think that is pretty much it, that, for me, I think it has been so far as I, my two months here.

Interviewer : And do you feel like it will make much difference if let us say when I Price come up with kind of um, book or this kind like of um training, whatever it is um, given to an employee, before they come to Malaysia, just like an overview like 'Hey if you are coming to Malaysia, this is what you all should know about.'

Participant 6 : Yeah, yeah I would, yeah that would be great um, sending it before, cause like I, I, have a chat with a Pilipino who is going to be working here um next year

Interviewer : Okay

- Participant 6 : Um, and answering these questions, like what do I, what do I wear, where do I buy food.
- Interviewer : Okay
- Interviewer : So yeah, it would be great um, but then, maybe you might forget once you are here, so, an um a quick refresh would be good as well once you are in um like, even maybe just a channel for, for like food suggestions, for like non-halal, I guess *giggles* I do not know. Yeah.
- Interviewer : Okay. All right, that sounds great. I think this is super good.
- Participant 6 : Really? Okay.
- Interviewer : Thank you. Thank you so much.



Participant 7 and 8

- Participant 7 : So, cross-cultural issues...
- Interviewer : Issues
- Participant 7 : ...right? How do we understand that?
- Interviewer : Yes, so in your definition, what does cultural issues or mean, cultural challenges mean to you. So, since we have both Participant 7 and Participant 8, maybe Participant 7 you start first.
- Participant 7 : Mhm, so, I prepared the answer.
- Interviewer : Ah so...
- Participant 7 : I feel like this is like in a simple um word, and it would be like when people like to have different expectations in a certain situation of life or, in a certain situation at work, at work...
- Interviewer : Mhm
- Participant 7 : ...so, and when these expectations mismatch, that is the where the cross-cultural issues, um...
- Interviewer : Challenge?
- Participant 7 : ...starts, yeah.
- Interviewer : Participant 8, you would have the?
- Participant 8 : Yeah, I can give an example...
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 8 : So, my boss came and like, he just came in, and I am like that is close, just in front of the entrance...
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 8 : And he did not say 'Good morning' or 'Hello.' He just came in and walks to his um, desk.
- Interviewer : Desk. Okay.
- Participant 8 : And did not say even 'Hello,' and it was shocking because it is considered rude in our culture, not to say greetings
- Interviewer : Oh
- Participant 8 : Yes, and I was shocked 'wow, how come he did not say good morning...'
- Participant 7 : He is a boss right
- Participant 8 : ...and he is a boss'. I am like, 'Oh my god.'
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 8 : Yeah, it was it, then I understood it was not common in Malaysia. 'Oh' *laughs*.
- Interviewer : So, you are from Russia back home. How does the culture there is?
- Participant 8 : It is very important to say greetings like even if you do not like your colleagues, still you better say good morning um, but like people...
- Participant 7 : Will treat it as an offense, right?
- Participant 8 : Yeah, treat it as an offense, yes.
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 7 : Like you ignore them or you...
- Participant 8 : Like you ignore them
- Participant 7 : ...or you cannot see them

Participant 8 : Yes.

Interviewer : Regardless if they were strangers?

Participant 7 : Mhm, mhm.

Participant 8 : No, no...

Participant 7 : No, only strangers like... [both Participant 7 and Participant 8 speak]

Participant 8 : ...complete strangers it is fine.

Participant 7 : Personal delivery guy, but you would say 'Good morning.'

Participant 8 : Yeah

Participant 7 : Even if they are strangers, right. As always, how to start a conversation?

Interviewer : Oh, okay, that is new. So, you- were you aware, you know when you first time- because you guys been here for at least four years, right? So, when you first moved to Malaysia, were you aware that you are going to face this kind of challenge?

Participant 7 : Um, no. Right, so, actually I was traveling with my mum. I start to travel when I was a kid, seven years old...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 7 : ...and I visit one month, I when being a kid, I s- I already found that there is some difference like I have in a Spain, Greek, in other countries. Even like we were just traveling as a tourist, but you can already f- like see the people, it is the same people, but there is something different that you cannot um, you know easily understand what is, what is this difference. And um, come back to the point, what do you, you ask?

Interviewer : Were you aware that you...

Participant 7 : Yeah, well, the being aware. I, I guess I have been a little bit aware that there will be definitely um different culture, different people, but about yeah, we have not been aware of the meaning of things.

Participant 8 : Yeah especially

Participant 7 : We did not encounter it.

Interviewer : So, on the challenge right, you have mentioned one of the challenges was the greetings. So, it was like a, a, a communication perspective of how you greet another person.

Participant 8 : Mhm

Interviewer : Where there any other challenges that you faced, you know, when the first time you move into Malaysia...

Participant 7 : Yes! Very important one *laughs* is that you know when you sit- um, for example, I started to work for a company in Puchong, and I found not only there, in every company I was working, um the people could be nearby you after lunch, they can easily- not after lunch, they can easily make interaction, right? They tend to do this often ... what do you call them?

Interviewer : What is that?

Participant 7 : Burp

Interviewer : Oh!

Participant 7 : Yeah!

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 8 : You really should not do that.

Participant 7 : I guess for me, that is shocking. This shocks me a lot because, even now, I still have the same people sitting in front of me, and people do it. It is, it is fine for him, but for me, it is always like um...

Interviewer : Is it like madness kind of...?

Participant 8 : Yeah, we should not do it, or you can do it, and you should say sorry, or like excuse me or something...

Participant 7 : Yeah, but in Russia, nobody will do it. Otherwise, people will just, you know, it is like a shame.

Interviewer : Cause I know that in some cultures, it says that, you know, when you burp, it is either you say excuse me or just do not burp.

Participant 7 : Yes.

Interviewer : It is called as disrespecting another person, or not being manners.

Participant 7 : In Malaysia, it happens everywhere. Almost everywhere.

Participant 8 : And it does not depend on (inaudible).

Interviewer : Yeah yeah yeah. Okay. So, how long did it take for you to overcome it literally? Or you still do not get over it?

Participant 8 : Yeah, I do not like that. I am not going to do that. I do not encourage doing that, and just, I am not able to change it.

Participant 7 : I think for me when I ask you to know, in a very private conversation, I ask a couple of friends why they are doing that. For them it is not disrespectful, just you know, it is just a culture. They have not been um, educated on this. Maybe educated in Russia or the USA, but for them, it is just to show that the food is good, or health issue, they do not want to keep it. I do not know, and I just took it as it is.

Interviewer : Okay, so, um, did you guys move in together, as you guys came to Malaysia together? Or Participant 8 came first, and you came later?

Participant 8 : I came first then Participant 7 came next.

Participant 7 : No, but we came to Malaysia in 2011 for a cultural internship. We were in Universiti Utara Malaysia, and we were teaching students um Russian language on English, showing our culture, um Russian culture, Russian cooking, and food. It was interesting as we get to communicate a lot with Malaysian students and at that time, we found that they were afraid, like for example, we could have a mission like during the day, we need to find and register around more than ten students so they can come to our session. And at that time, Participant 8 supposed to come to any person who is passing through between their lessons, and he could not even come. The girl was super afraid, were not say anything. They will run away *laughs*

Participant 8 : One out of 10 students could listen or understand what I am trying to say.

Participant 7 : But they are very, it is very um, what is the state?

Participant 8 : Kedah.

Participant 7 : Kedah. Kedah state they are most, they are stricter there. Like you cannot go to the girls, so, only 100 meters you have to stop, you cannot go near girls *giggles*. You cannot keep hands the hands of each other, I mean for us is fine...but I cannot even stay with Participant 7 and our dorms are located far apart due to gender.

Interviewer : Yes yes.

Participant 7 : And some of there, you have to follow their rules, not to show...

Participant 8 : Yes, to not have any problem.

Interviewer : Wow. So, I would not say it as a challenge, but it is something new.

Participant 7 : Something new

Participant 8 : Something new.

Interviewer : Because it is quite different in Russia, where it is fine to hold hands and walk, but in Malaysia, as a Muslim country, it is different. As a Muslim girl, you cannot shake hands with an unmarried man, unless it is your husband.

Participant 7 : So, at that time, we already start, um, start understanding the culture right.

Participant 8 : Yes

Participant 7 : I mean not understanding but start meeting the culture.

Participant 8 : Yes yes.

Interviewer : So, you did not find that as a challenge? Meaning, oh my god, I cannot be near to Participant 7.

Participant 8 : No, no, no, we could, it is not a problem, just some, quite difficult to distribute to others because the students are not eager to talk to us.

Participant 7 : They were shy

Participant 8 : They were shy

Participant 7 : Or afraid

Participant 8 : Something like that

Interviewer : So...

Participant 7 : And then we have to find the way, how to stop the person and...

Participant 8 : I told you 1 out of 10 students get an invitation from us.

Interviewer : So, before you same- so Kedah was the first time you came to Malaysia right.

Participant 8 : Yes, and then we went back, and then...

Interviewer : Came back then *laughs*

Participant 7 : Participant 8 got a professional internship invitation to Malaysia, and I worked in Columbia, so for me, it is all cultural issues. But it is different for me. That is why I think for me, Malaysia, it already became easy, I guess.

Interviewer : So, which was harder, Malaysia or Columbia?

Participant 7 : Malaysia

Interviewer : Malaysia is harder. Okay. So, before you moved from Russia because that is the first time you move away from Russia right, did you take any kind of preparation or training...

Participant 8 : We go under a committee, and we took an internship under it. They provide training, but it was not training, they just shared a presentation called cultural issues, so, please, if you are going to southeast Asia, please be aware of these issues, and if you are going to Africa, please be aware of these issues. We just read it together *giggles*

Interviewer : So, it was not, and it was just like okay, it is going to be there, we will face it.

Participant 8 : Yeah, we did not pay attention as we should prepare ourselves like we will find it ourselves.

Interviewer : Okay, how long in prior did you receive that information? That presentation? Was it like one month before you came to Malaysia...?

Participant 7 : The same as what- I was working there in Midvalley, and he already been here for two months, right?

Participant 8 : Yeah

Participant 7 : So, they also send me the same presentation. [both Participant 7 and Participant 8 speak]. So, one month...

Interviewer : Did you find that short presentation as useful, as looking it right now?

Participant 8 : I think if I open mouth and read it carefully...

Interviewer : *laughs*

Participant 8 : ... in advance, but I did not read much

Participant 7 : Usually, people read...

Interviewer : Yeah. So, but when you came to Malaysia, did you receive any sort of training or preparation?

Participant 7 : No training at all.

Participant 8 : No...

Interviewer : How did you like to adapt to it?

Participant 7 : Just practice

Interviewer : *laughs*

Participant 7 : *Laughs* everyday experience. I think it also depends on the people where they can adapt easily, and I can also tell you that my friend working in Russia, I offered her many times to work here, you to try your skill in other countries, try to communicate with people in other countries. But she is so limited because she is used to be in the comfort zone. She does not want to come here, right. For me, I guess I was looking for something like an adventure. So, it opens my perspective.

Interviewer : So, you told that another person was helping you. Was that a local person or just another expatriate?

Participant 8 : Another expatriate...

Participant 7 : Another expatriate, but for you, it was another expatriate who is new.

- Participant 8 : She tries to invoke value here, where to change money, where to find food
- Participant 7 : It is not about how to deal with people.
: She expects me to know something, but she was not in Kuala Lumpur, she was from Kedah. She just met me at the airport and left the next day. So, and there was another friend, and expatriate, from Tunisia...
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 7 : But this honest gesture- I remember how Participant 8 called me by skype, I was still in Russia, he was in the small, small room, his first day in Malaysia, so sad, no window in the apartment...
- Participant 8 : It was a room
- Participant 7 : Yes, it was room. He told me he surrounded by Chinese girls who did not- I mean, they are not an open mind; they did not start speaking with him, so he just left home.
- Interviewer : *laughs*
- Participant 7 : *laughs*. I mean, this was a bit difficult. But for me, there is another example. When i came back after Columbia internship, he was kind of encouraging me to come back to Malaysia since he is here, and it is quite famous in Malaysia for the IT hub. Many start-ups in it, and you do not have to speak in Spanish. When I was there, I was alone in the streets, and I realize that only the company people can speak English, but outside, only Spanish.
- Participant 8 : Only Spanish
- Participant 7 : Yes, this is another problem that I have to adapt to and all this. I had to go to the supermarket and read what the meat is, how it is in Spanish, how to say, how to order. But when I came here, I found the same in Participant 8 in one apartment, right? You were living and sharing that apartment with other Chinese members, right?
- Participant 8 : Housemates. Yes, they stole my food from the fridge, and they were not friendly to me. It' how do you say,.. uncommon for strangers to stay in another person's house.
- Participant 7 : Housemates. And I found that they do not communicate. Sometimes I do not see them for months. However, for me, in Columbia, everyone is open, so um, positive, so sociable um, you know, like, when I came here, they told me 'oh Participant 7, do not try to speak with them' and so on. And my first day, because I did not work that time, I decided to cook pancakes and then decided to go to each room to meet each housemate and say like 'hi, my name is Participant 7'. People told me not to try, but I found a friend soon, which is Chinese.
- Participant 8 : So, it was not one Chinese right, and it was two Chinese ladies.
- Participant 7 : Yes
- Participant 8 : So

Participant 7 : But that is how Participant 8 and I became friends with 'Soon.'

Participant 8 : With this Chinese guy, because she knocks his door and told 'By the way, I bought pancakes' *giggles

Interviewer : *Laughs*.

Participant 7 : *Laughs*

Participant 8 : It is not unusual in Malaysia; nobody does do it...

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 7 : It was only me, and he told me, 'Participant 7, you cannot live here, girls do not care about their hair, dress,.. they do not dress up'. Russian girls used to be on high heels and looking on point all the time.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 7 : Always like, I mean a lot of different like...

Participant 8 : Dress

Participant 7 : ...jewelry, and um hairstyle but here I do not know, he was telling me...

Participant 8 : Yeah, I saw, 'Is that what it is?'

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 7 : *Laughs* oh Participant 8.

Interviewer : So, in Russia, let us say if you are moving to a new place, you bring like an introduction?

Participant 8 : It is not common that we share an apartment, but here it is really common. If you are in my apartment, they share stuff. Even if you like, do not use it.

Interviewer : Yeah *laughs*

Participant 8 : In Russia, it is not common at all, but if people do, they communicate together well share food something like that, like 'my food you do not touch, your food I will not touch.'

Interviewer : Oh. Okay, so, you had the struggles, right? So, what helped you to adjust? Was it yourself, or did you have some friends who are there or any support system?

Participant 8 : We got some friends who face the same issues. We could share.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 8 : Just be yourself first of all...

Participant 7 : Another issue is that sometimes we cannot change like burp, it is difficult, people already live like that. But other things like cultural issues, when you are in the meetings, or work, if the person did not treat you well, then it is better to invite this person and speak to each other honestly and find out how to find the way to communicate or solution.

Interviewer : Okay, so, when you first officially moved here to work, did the company helped you in any way?

Participant 8 : There was some presentation, um about cultures...

Participant 7 : Um, okay, we had days of like how many countries. So, we had days...

Participant 8 : Dedicated to each culture.

Participant 7 : ...which are dedicated to each culture. So, you will be able to understand and dig deeper into the culture. Like in

Russian day, what we eat, how we behave, what kind of outfit we wear in different occasion. So, we could present our culture. So, it will be nice if we have a different culture day, where you can first ask about the dress code so that people can find something similar. Is it a collar or maybe gloves...? We can wear shorts, maybe short...

Interviewer : Slides or documentation...

Participant 7 : Yes, short slides...

Participant 8 : Yes yes.

Interviewer : So, how you wished, you know, at least they would have given you that kind of information? How long in prior do you wish you had this information?

Participant 8 : I think once we join.

Interviewer : Once you join? Okay, so on the training-wise, being an expatriate, do you think it is important for somebody to have like cultural education or training to adjust in Malaysia?

Participant 7 : I think yes, truly.

Interviewer : So, let us say if I Price comes up with a cultural education handbook or anything, what kind of content should we have inside the handbook that you feel that it will be super useful for any expatriates that are going to work in Malaysia.

Participant 7 : Um, difficult to say, right? Because of different people, even Malaysia...

Participant 8 : I think maybe how do clinics and hospitals work...

Interviewer : Mhm.

Participant 8 : Because that is...

Participant 7 : The system...

Participant 8 : ...is different from Russia.

Participant 7 : Most habits that people um...

Participant 8 : The habit of people... Um, it is common in Russia to call each other, but here if there is any problem, everyone prefers WhatsApp and writing.

Participant 7 : That is the first communication. Okay, if there is an issue, I prefer to like walk to the person and find out how we can resolve the issue.

Participant 8 : I notice that people say that 'Oh, you can write to me.'

Interviewer : Okay, anything else in that book that you would like to add?

Participant 7 : I am just thinking, people most of the time, and they behave in such vengeance as you mentioned the partners. But, how can it be helpful in terms of, like we cannot change it? Since Malaysia they already kind of agree to work in a company where there are expatriates, so it should be like both...

Interviewer : Both ways.

Participant 7 : Because if you do not know that Malaysian, if they do not prefer to have one on one conversation to find a solution, so, usually they go to somewhere out and speak behind your back.

Participant 8 : Yes.

Participant 7 : That is what I realize here in Malaysia; you have to be careful. If you want to tell the person something- you know

in I Price it is better, but in my village, it is crazy. I had to to say um like a baby, speak like a baby. In Russia, it is like if you do not like something...

Participant 8 : Yeah yeah yeah.

Participant 7 : ...you discuss it straightforward...

Participant 8 : Yes

Participant 7 : ...you do not lie, you do not do some bad stuff behind their back.

Participant 8 : If somebody does it, society will not appreciate, and it does not matter if it is true or not...

Participant 7 : Yeah yeah yeah.

Participant 8 : ...he did it behind him or her back, it is really bad.

Interviewer : Wow

Participant 8 : Like for example, you share accommodation with a person and you, you used to cook...

Interviewer : Mhm.

Participant 8 : ...and then it is against the house management rules, and then it goes to the agent, then the agent goes to... They cheat her to do. Yes. She was like, what did I do, just next time talk to me.

Participant 7 : No, no, but I know many people could not find agreement, right? But at least if you try, you can um go to another state.

Participant 8 : Yeah

Interviewer : So, do you have anything that you would add to this topic? Like the challenges you guys faced, or...

Participant 7 : It would be hmmm great if there is some sort of information or education on how to talk to people here whether can we direct or not and what will people think if we are direct... you know those kinds of stuff...

Participant 8 : Yea yea Like what and how they prefer to talk .. some even prefer through Whatsapp and zero face to face communication... this would be easier or giving us awareness about this...

Interviewer : Hmm okay...

Participant 7 : That book, it would be good to have something like how people should behave in meetings, how to respect the children, how to respect women, how to respect the ladies, because of people from Arabic countries, um...

Interviewer : Middle east

Participant 7 : Yes, and still behave, they do not, they usually decline the fact that they treat the ladies differently. There is something in their behavior that you can feel it. But in Vietnamese, for example, because of Vietnamese people um easier, they respect the woman. A woman can live there. It can become a manager, and so on. Easier to communicate with Vietnamese.

Interviewer : Did you feel like your personality as an individual played a role in adjusting to the culture here? Assuming you are an introvert, and these were the problems that you are facing, do you think it will be hard for you? Because you do not talk

to people, so, you do not want to ask people about your problems. If your personality were an introvert, do you think that you would have just given up and just go back to your country? DO you think your personality would have played a bit of role in this kind of adjustment?

Participant 8 : Um...

Participant 7 : If it is introverted, you mean?

Interviewer : Yeah, I mean, um, your personality in general. Because I have been doing this interview and I realized that most of them had the character where they know that they are going to face some cultural issues because they are going to a new country, but they are flexible. And some people are not flexible.

Participant 8 : Yes yes...

Participant 7 : Yes

Participant 8 : ...that is what she told about her friend...

Participant 7 : Adaptability, yeah.

Interviewer : So, adaptability, exactly. So, because you are flexible- like, for example, Indians eat with fingers. Some people cannot do it, but then they became flexible, and they willing to do it to respect their culture. So, do you think that personality of yourself played some role in this adjustment?

Participant 8 : Yeah, definitely, because we are flexible, that is why we stay here for years.

Participant 7 : But anyway, we did not eat with hands...

Participant 8 : But we...

Participant 7 : *Laughs*

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 7 : So, we were fine. For example, I like Indian culture, and I know all movies since small.

Interviewer : So, because it was because of your personality, you could be flexible?

Participant 8 : Yeah

Participant 7 : Maybe movies help as well. Maybe share movies about learning culture.

Interviewer : Very good idea, like 'Hey, watch this movie, it gives you a bit context about what Malaysia is all about.

Participant 8 : Mhm.

Interviewer : Okay, all right. It is good, and I think we have covered a lot. Anything else you guys want to share?

Participant 7 : I think it is fine.

Participant 8 : Yeah, we have mentioned everything.

Interviewer : Thank you.

Participant 9

Interviewer : I am going to record this.

Participant 9 : Yeah, that is fine.

Interviewer : So, in your word, what is a cultural challenge means for you?

Participant 9 : Culture challenge in, if I want, like, I do not know like, when you say cultural challenge, everything is a change, like everything. Culture challenge is essentially putting yourself in a new planet. If I were to say right, in that sense. Now, I am going to speak from my own experience right, like to think about this way. It was not the first between when you move for the first time versus are you an experienced person, and I want to share my own experience, right? I grew up in India...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 9 : ...and I grew up in Mumbai which is a fact a metropolitan City

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 9 : But my parents come from the north, and then they would have travel, happy-go-lucky people, so they used to travel quite a lot. So I have seen a lot of India. Why do I say that? In comparison, when I moved, like there is another chap, my friend, okay. He grew up in Mumbai. He goes down south where his family is. He is more like a Mumbai guy, okay. It does not travel as much, okay. Nothing compared to what I traveled, right? I grew up in Mumbai. Both are sharp, sharp people, right. Same company. We both moved to China, okay. He has at least traveled abroad once to Europe before that, but just like travel for two-three weeks. I had never traveled abroad. I just have some friends and some family living abroad but never traveled abroad, and we both go to Shanghai, okay, and somehow both like 22 23, right? I am a vegetarian he eats chicken and India, but nothing that he never eats as vegetarian food.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 9 : You go to a new country. You land there; you do realize there was no smartphone back then.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 9 : Okay, and we did not have enough time to prepare ourselves. That, once you land in Shanghai, although it is a big city, nobody speaks English.

Interviewer : Yes

Participant 9 : Getting food, like, you know, like in India, if you go to McDonald's, people speak English there, so you do think let us go to McDonald's over there because it is spoken English. So,

you- we went into a KFC or McD to ask for directions hoping that they speak English. Nada. Nothing.

Interviewer : Oh wow.

Participant 9 : Right, so my perception was what, that everything that was so-called premium, in India as a culture I grew up, oh International English is you know spoken by the literate class, all those barriers break, when I go to a new country, right, that for me is a culture shock, right? Then when you go and say I want vegetarian food because that is what vegetarian in India is, right? There is no word for vegetarians. So, we see in vegetables, right? So, they give me vegetables, but they also put pork or fish in it because for them, yeah there are more vegetables in it, but you also want some meat.

Interviewer : That is a culture shock.

Participant 9 : So, what I mean that anything that you have dreamt or the way you have lived, once you go to a different environment in different countries or something, even a different family right, in Malaysia, right? The way an Indian Malay family lives is very different from an Indian Chinese fam- oh sorry, a Chinese Malay family to a Bumiputra local family right. Very different. So, think of the same thing, but it is so extrapolated ten times or 100 times, and that for me is cultural differences, culture shocks, and adaptation.

Interviewer : Wow.

Participant 9 : This is, this is just your basic surrounding right. And then when you go into people and everything you realize, they are different. Just to add. At the same time, what I realized is once you overcome the superficial levels...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 9 : ... that is when you realize that certain cultures are similar and certain cultures are different. Like how we say Asian culture is similar.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 9 : Like warm, Asian people are warm-hearted. Arabic people Middle East people are a bit more warm-hearted. Whereas the os- um Americans or the Europeans we called him, you know not cold-hearted, but you know, they are bit more reserved and everything. Why? Because once you break the language barrier between China and India or southeast Asia, you start realizing that the behavior is very similar amongst us.

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 9 : Focused on the family, focus on accommodating things. I could go in an Mcd- down in China, and they are s- similar to India

where you know, they will get even but not too vegies if I tell them I do not eat meat. They will put in the effort in the hotel to go and make something for me. Try getting that done in um, France or something, like I am not saying France per se, but I am just saying that it is that much more difficult.

Interviewer : Yes

Participant 9 : Correct. There are certain things where you notice that there is a similarity, as the element of space. We do not have the concept of space in China, India, or even Jakarta, right? Like you cramp up space, but try doing that in um London metro or New York metro right, if you just you know bump in someone or something, they are like “Hey, maintain distance” or, you know, “What are you doing? Why are you standing so close to me? Please take a step back.”

Interviewer : Wow

Participant 9 : Those things happen. For us, you know, if you are a friend or I am meeting for the first time, you know, it is perfectly okay for me to come, right. Ask you some questions, ask “Hey, how is your family” and everything. Not everybody is open to businesses. So, you know, as much as there are differences, there are also actually many commonalities that come in when you go to different cultures, but you have to bring the initial um layer to reach that.

Interviewer : Okay. So when you move to Malaysia, did you know you are going to be facing some of this, you know, challenges?

Participant 9 : So, this is where um I was just speaking before right. It is about the first move versus are you an experienced mover.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 9 : Right. So, when I move to China, that was a massive change for me, right? And it took me time to duck in. It took me six months just to feel comfortable the right; before that, there were days I am like, ‘I just want to get out from here’ right. Um, but when I moved to Turkey um after China, I was again a bit apprehensive because I am like, you know, got used to China now, but Turkey is completely new, you know. I have never been to that country before.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 9 : Right? And I am moving with my wife, who was, we were getting married, with, that transition was happening. So, I do not know the wife, and I was moving to a new country.

Interviewer : *Laughs* okay.

Participant 9 : Right? So, it was pretty insane, right?

- Interviewer : So both are new.
- Participant 9 : Correct. And, and it was insane. And a new job, right? Like so, I like, okay, what the hell, right? But the thing is you know; then I realize in Turkey very quickly that the culture is much more Asian Indian than actually European. I thought it might be very European and then I found various ways in which it was European in certain aspects but also very Asian a lot. So, I knew I had to adapt this way. But then I used to travel to Europe and um the UK quite a lot, right. And work with many people from there, and because I have been working from China also with them, it was very easy - for me to understand when I am working with the European client, the behavior is very different from my Turkish client. The Turkish client, you know, is all about relationship, going there, and meeting them, having a cup of tea. Like, there is no meeting in Turkey where you do not have tea with the client, or you know the client just smoking, and we are discussing things about the business. Whereas in Europe, everything was on the table or you know, just work to work. I have never gone out with probably any of my clients or for lunch, drinks, or tea or coffee right. It was, maybe, sometimes my clients were nice, and they invited for lunch, and that is about it.
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 9 : That was very business-oriented. Turkey, discuss family, you disc-likee, just like Asia. So, then for me to come to Malaysia, I mean, I, I, I did not know anything about Malaysia to be frank right. I did not even know actually why there was such a big community over here right
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 9 : I think it is so different here-
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 9 : To be frank, right. When I came, I saw oh okay, this is interesting, and then I noticed that oh this is that communities and then you know, the behaviors that are common in certain ways, but they maintain their identity. It was not tough for me.
- Interviewer : Mhm
- Participant 9 : To be very frank with you. Um, it is by far the easiest Country I have adapted into because language is not a concern over here. Most people speak English...
- Interviewer : Yes
- Participant 9 : Um, in terms of food and everything, I have lived in China. I am an Indian so, even though I am not a South Indian, but I understand that concept. So that is not too different food wise I am very okay. So actually this is by far the easiest country I

have- For me the culture issue in Malaysia is more about, I am surprised by how the politics of how the people, you know, the keep those things separate, there is an undercurrent in the society, nobody is, you know, everybody keeps it peaceful. So, for me, that was interesting. I, I, I like it, but it is compared to what I had to go through before, this was easier.

Interviewer : Okay. So, you have been, so Shanghai was your first country.

Participant 9 : Mhm.

Interviewer : So, what was the challenge you faced in Shanghai?

Participant 9 : So, I shared what, what I wrote in my application, essay.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 9 : Because that was, that is the focus of right, what are the cultured issues you face. So take an example. I had already been working in this company for two years, right. And I went to a client-facing role over there. So, you know, like the work was not typically new for me. Of course, China-related things are different, you know they work, but the thing I had faced over there is when you have to talk with somebody, so what do you realize is they all speak English. I used to think they all speak fluent English because hey, we are an American company, right? What I realized over there is, they use translation services actually to convert um, convert Mandarin to English, and they use that. That is why their English so good, but when you talk to them face-to-face, you cannot. They cannot speak fluent English; at least my couple of colleagues could not.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 9 : Now we were in a fix, and they would try to explain to me, I was not able to talk to them like I used to speak good English because I studied in English medium in India in In- India. English is my first language, right. I used to use complicated length words, and we would not get ahead and tail, right, of it. And I am not using complicated actually. My English is fairly basic, but it-, you know, a decent amount of words, they would not get it. And when we were having communication issues, and they used to think that I am not willing to help, I used to feel like they are not explaining enough, but to be honest, they also put in the effort, I also put in the effort, and over some time, I realize that to communicate with them, I need to break down the communication. I need, I need to use simple words. I need to speak slowly like right now. I am speaking a bit fast. I had to slow down like ‘, I, used, too, talk, too, them, in, this, kind, of, a, way.’

Interviewer : Wow.

Participant 9 : I truly had to slow down the speed. I was a fast talker back in school and, and then I had to cut it down significantly because otherwise, they would not get it. I started- in my head, I used to “No, no, this is complex, I need to use simpler words, even simpler words...

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 9 : ...use that”. Right. I realized that, for certain things, they prefer communication, or on, um, communicator than personally talking. So, I knew what, I used to go and talk to them only when I knew that it is important enough to talk or it is a big topic. Otherwise, via DM, IM, or Email. Because they were comfortable with that. They use to feel shy speaking in English. Whenever we had meetings, we were in MNC, the other foreigners, and me, typically my Indian friends and me, we were the ones who are always asking questions. Nobody else wanted to ask questions. Not because they are not shy, I mean, they are shy of course, but because they feel hesitant that ‘our English is not good’ so, if an, you know foreigner, CEO somebody comes, and you do not feel comfortable asking the question. How do you get them to ask a question, right? So, you have to find ways, like you pre-plan the question, or you take the questions beforehand and then get the answers. So, there were a lot of these issues, and it takes much investment, right? As a foreigner, being one of them, you know, like, there are many foreigners in Shanghai but, still right, like, you- you are working with junior folks are mainly Chinese right, so, my boss is talking to the foreigner boss over there, the client. I have to talk. Now I need to do the work right, but I am not Chinese. So, when the Chinese and Chinese talk, they have their ways of communicating and...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 9 : ...getting things done, right? But I am not Chinese. So, how do I talk to my client, who is a junior, which I need to get info, but how do they prioritize for me and how do I explain it, right. So, you have to find ways to connect with it, now how do I connect with them? I am, my, my language is, if you can speak the language, that is one of the greatest assets. So, ideally, you want to go to a country in the language. I am not good at languages. Okay, I am a left-brain guy, I am not a right-brain guy, okay. So, what do I do? I started- I, I could not watch the TV all day all night right, and we did not have that many internet movies back in the day. So, we used to watch a few little things over here on TV or watch the news or read the news locally, and then, speak in basic Mandarin just to say ‘hello’ ‘hi’ ‘how are you,’ why? Because I want to connect with my clients with my team. So, I will start with Mandarin, ‘*ni hao*,’ um you know ‘*ni hao ma*,’ and they will laugh at me, and I would make a mistake, and you know, that is fine. But at least over large, I will like “Oh so I saw these walls* of china yesterday, sounds very cool, how is

that.” I did not know the head and tail of it, but I found ways to connect with my audience, right, and that is important because then they start trusting me over time, then they tell me the gossip, then they tell me...

Interviewer : Everything

Participant 9 : ...everything. *giggles* Which I hear, but my boss does not hear, right. Why? Because my boss always talks to them in English. So, you have to find that connection. You have to come to their level and talk, right. And, and, and that takes time and effort. And which is why, if you ask me when, when you move as an expat, the reason why back in the day, foreigners are paid a higher salary or they taking care of their houses, cars which do not happen anymore. I did not get it. I am not from that age, but I know some people who used to get it at that time. The reason is that if I do not have to worry about my house and everything, I can focus on my job. And honestly like, if you do not do that, then the amount of time you spent on thinking about the house, you have to, you know, find um you know school kids and you know, the money and you know, because think about it if I am a foreigner, I might be okay sending my kids to a Chinese school, not always. But I have friends who- whose children speak fluent Mandarin but not they all speak English. And if you do not bring English early enough, then they will struggle in English in a long time. So, you wanna, you want to do those, that is why expats are expensive right, but you want them to focus on the job.

Interviewer : Okay. So, that was in China. In Malaysia, did you face any extreme challenges?

Participant 9 : No.

Interviewer : No? Because you felt like you went the worse?

Participant 9 : Exactly. Now you throw me anywhere in the world, think about it, after China, what is...

Interviewer : What is...

Participant 9 : ...what's right?

Interviewer : ...yeah

Participant 9 : Maybe some African country, but even over there, they speak French and English, right?

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 9 : I am sure I will getaway. That said when I look at things at um, okay maybe one example of Malaysia. I think Malaysia, for example, the government process and everything is not as efficient, and it is like India. So, now I actually, I value um, how do foreigners in India will be because some of the additional

work you need to do in Malaysia is not as efficient. Whereas in China, everything is super-efficient. I could not speak a word to the electricity person or anybody, but as a foreigner I go, I point things, body language is amazing. Actually, in culture, if there is one thing, it is body language. You need to have a good body language. If you are seen as aggressive and everything, they will not talk to you, right?

Interviewer : Yeah yeah.

Participant 9 : Because... But in the initial days, you know, body movements, smile, things like that matter a lot. And I look at every, I never had, any 1 issue in China related to my tax, anything. I will go to the tax office, and they know what a foreigner wants. Give it to them; they give it to you, you go.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 9 : Very very straightforward. No corruption, nothing. Malaysia, yeah, I mean, sometimes getting a basic WiFi, is, is a pain. And they want 50 Ringgit for this and that. China was nothing. Life was easy. So, a bitter on that, you know, like small, petty things take up sometimes a bit of your time but not from a cultural standpoint. Largely, largely no.

Interviewer : So, did your spouse face any struggle?

Participant 9 : Yeah, she not even to get a job, right.

Interviewer : In Turkey?

Participant 9 : Correct. She could not get a job in Turkey. So, you know, we did not know each other enough, so when we moved to Turkey, she left her, her job in um Bombay and she came and join, and I knew it would be a struggle because it is not a country with many foreigners are there and everything, but it was tough, and you know like, we never manage to build up a strong social circle over there. I would take off my from the company's friends and everybody. Um, and, and again I think, it, for her, it was the first time. So, I could see; actually, that is interesting. After China, because I move to Turkey, it was my second, but I have seen China, so Turkey being closer to India in many things actually, for me Turkey was still much easier, but for her, it was super tough because she is living outside of India for the first time, and that is the first country she went to. So, everything from food, to everything and everything was a challenge for her. I could see her facing issues similar to what I face right. So, then I would share with her like, okay, you know, we could do it this way, do not worry if it does not understand, just call the person, show him, typically he would understand. Because she will be like, "If I call the water guy, what if he did not understand and everything." I am like, do not worry, just do not worry about security or anything. Just call him, show him, he will understand what to do, he will show you, he will give you receipt, and they

will understand, right. And, and it is okay, you know that there is a foreigner, you might take 20% more than a local. That is fine, right. You have to deal with it. There is nothing you can do. So, then I saw the change in her also right. Then she became an expert right, she would go on her way, and she would not, she would not worry, she knew that, okay, you know, things will be okay. Things like security, things like you could ask me, like our neighbor, who was a very old aunty okay, her son used to visit her from time to time. But, so, we did not speak the language, but you know, just like she would come and say a few things and my wife would smile, or she would look at us, and she will say a few things. We smile, and sometimes she is watching an Indian drama or even behaving properly in society, you know small little thing and she would, sh- by the end of it my wife know the local grocery guy, she knew our neighbor, she knew a couple of people, and we do not know them, know them, but, you know, it, it makes your life comfortable. The important thing here was also talking to the locals as it was kind of the fastest way to know stuff about the local places and get things sorted.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 9 : So, I feel the experience matters a lot. Whether it is the first time moving to a country, or the second or the third time.

Interviewer : Okay, so, um, when, so, when what was the platform or the support system you used when you came to Malaysia? So was it through friends, prior experience, I mean, I think your prior experience helped you to adjust...

Participant 9 : Correct

Interviewer : ...right, in Malaysia and then, did that even became better with any like friends or other information?

Participant 9 : I think it did. I mean, um, to be frank, be- okay, you know if people say 'oh having a friend is helpful.' I mean, I would have managed it without that, but yes, I did know a couple of people here who, who gave me inputs and, and that helped me to adjust to the city and everything. But you know the drawback of that. What happens if you know a friend and if you know who is willing to take risks or something, or if you are going to think that your friend is going to do everything for you, you are expecting too much.

Interviewer : Was the friend local or...?

Participant 9 : No, he, he was an ex-pat himself, but he has been here for a couple of years right. So, they help me with a few things, but I cannot call him for everything also and I should not. You should learn to burn your hands, or you are in there, and then learn from

the experience because that will teach you a lot more than your friend doing things for you.

Interviewer : Yeah, sure.

Participant 9 : So, you should use your friend and everybody for sure, but use it to a certain extent, and not worry about 'oh did you pay, oh I paid 150 for this, you paid only 100'. Just forget about the fact you paid, like this is the cost of moving. You, you are going to pay a year, and you might have some additional cost, it is just a part of it, just let go, do not stress about it.

Interviewer : So, did your company, did I price helped you to adjust in any way?

Participant 9 : Provided accommodation for one week, which is too small. Too small, yeah. I think I think it should ideally be a bit long. Now I, I, I, get that in certain countries there are houses easily available, so two weeks is enough. But I think if you move somebody in the first week, and you know, also depending on the, like even for me, like, you might think I am a senior kind of guy, so I have enough money and everything but trust me, when you move, paying all that deposit and everything is quite stressful, right. And, and which is why you know if you give somebody a place for a month, it allows you to, you know to settle down to the job as well as to look out for apartments and not rushing to it. I do not know what the current company policy is, but one week is really short. One week is nothing.

Interviewer : Did Shanghai company, I mean when, when you move to Shanghai did...

Participant 9 : Everywhere I got one month when I moved.

Interviewer : And how did Shanghai company helped you to adjust because it was your first time, right? So...

Participant 9 : So, I think, I mean, it is also a big company. I am not going to deny. So, the process is slightly better off. To be frank, they did not do a lot, and, and that is why I think Turkey was better. Turkey assigned me an agent, and I could leverage their services, and I did not have to pay for it. Um, whereas in Shanghai, actually had to pay for it. Um, but Shanghai again I had friends, and not friends, friend's friend, somebody had connected later, so I did not know them, but, so they gave me their agent's number and because they were the only people I knew he went to take an apartment in their area, nothing else to do, so it was far for my office, but that is okay because for us that little company in a country where nobody speaks your language was worth it. Then, next year we came back because get settled and everything. But, but things that can, you know, um, having an agent help you out, and agent that freeze you right, so that is why it needs to be a company relationship. The problem is that initially, for example, in Turkey, we had a

company agent; he was showing me very fancy places. I am like, “Dude, I am not getting paid enough,” and he used to think, “Oh ya, you are an expert”... you will g- you know the company will pay for you, and your budget will be high. And, it also preferences right. Somebody might be prepared to pay 40% of the salary on rent. I could not right. For my reasons. I do not want to spend more than 25%, 20% right. So, then you have to sometimes work with that company person until he had met your budget, but I had still invested much time to get the house, but at least he made sure that the paperwork, once he chose the house, he got the paperwork and everything done. So, I am okay with that. I did not care.

Interviewer : So, you mentioned that Turkey gave, I mean, they linked you with an agent.

Participant 9 : Correct.

Interviewer : So, what did that agent do?

Participant 9 : So, initially, he showed us some properties, but they were way out the . Then I told him the budget, then he will “Oh, this is too small,” and then he just showed us some random prices like dude, this is not going anywhere. So, what I did is I went like, I Property, there was another company. I went on that, and I searched houses, my wife and me, and you know, my wife went to that, but that is what I am said, a month right. And that is even when like I have to justify myself and the new job also right, and it is not like my company is like “Oh yeah, take one month to find the house” right.

Interviewer : Yeah yeah.

Participant 9 : It is a new thing. So, we spent time on that. We found the houses. We take the initial viewings, and then we like the place. Luckily the owner spoke English but not the agent, but he connected to us to the owner, the agent, she spoke English, and then we connected, and you know, we liked the house. So, then all the paperwork, our agent handled it, I did not have to worry about it. So, things like that helped outright. So, in Malaysia, okay everybody speaks English, so you do not have that problem, but trust me if you were to go to Indonesia, as a foreigner, it is not easy.

Interviewer : Okay, so um, what has helped you to adjust so far? Was it like research or training or, is there anything else that helped you adjust?

Participant 9 : I think, to be honest, um, when it comes to adjustment into a new country or a new culture, it is all about you...

Interviewer : So...

Participant 9 : You have to open the effort; you have to open the mind.

- Interviewer : Did your personality played any...?
- Participant 9 : Absolutely. Everybody. You have to open up. Now, of course, it depends on the person also right, what they think, they are adjusting. I might, I might, to this much to believe that I, I have adjusted, or somebody might say, "I did this, but I adjusted, what more do you want?"
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 9 : Right. I will show an example again, right. I can do China and then new I will stay* for at least two years, that was my mindset right, and I knew that my budget is not mattered right, so, for us going to an Indian restaurant or even going into Pizza Hut was like expensive, right. So, we had the mentality that we had to adapt to the local food fast because it is cheap and good. We cannot just go out eating Indian food all the time, right. So, I adapted to the taste very quickly.
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 9 : Right. I am a vegetarian, right. For me, initially, that spinach and everything was like "Boy that has no taste" coming from India right, but I started to like it right because I open my mind to it, right. I had other friends who came in, and for them, they were like "Oh we are just here for a year" or "Oh we work here for two years, but you know, company pays, they give us so much money," that they can afford to eat out Indian food every day or something, or they can order. Happened with many of my bosses at that time right, they were all foreigners. So, they would do this, like what you have uber eats now, used to have some local company, who targeted foreigners because money was not a problem. The problem with that approach is that you will never adapt easily to local tastes. Opening that mind up to local experience is important. They used to take cabs every day and go.
- Interviewer : Yeah.
- Participant 9 : I could not afford a cab. So, I only take public transport. They used to be surprised that "Oh, you are a foreigner and traveling in um Shanghai local bus." Like, I do not mind it. Again, I am coming from Mumbai, have you seen the rush in Mumbai?
- Interviewer : *Giggles*
- Participant 9 : After that, getting an air-conditioned bus or train is already a luxury.
- Interviewer : *Laughs* wow.
- Participant 9 : Or even if it is crowded, I can do it.
- Interviewer : Okay.

- Participant 9 : So, what I am trying to say is that it is, it is a lot about, or your personality and effort.
- Interviewer : Yeah.
- Participant 9 : You need to put it in.
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 9 : And, and trust me, in Malaysia, I have, you have been a bit luxurious right. Like today, I am, I can like even if I (inaudible) local food, I, I can afford to pay for something more right, um, so, I have not tried all the local drinks, also because now I am old and you know, I have my taste preferences like I cannot have all them. So, when I came, I tried right. I had the local teas and coffees and everything, and I was like, okay, the taste is nice, but it is too sugary. So, when I go, I will say 'no sugar' or I' will just go for um you know a coffee shop or something because I um, you know, the preference taste. But it is important to come and try, right. It is okay to come and try the local, um, what is, what do you call it, 'Mamak' place.
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 9 : Right. And say how the taste is. And then yeah, it is not nice, or it might be oily food or something, I will not go but, but if you do not do that, you will never be able to adapt. So, it is a lot about that adjustment and then also making sure that you know you invest time in it, which to be honest if you are asking other people to come and work here and you give them seven days to fond house and you aspect them to perform from day 1, there is a lot that um, mental pressure that comes.
- Interviewer : Is there something that made it difficult to adjust?
- Participant 9 : I think it is an expectation that people have. Like to be frank I think in my previous company, both when I moved to China and Turkey, my boss has- and- same was I, even I had some foreigners coming here and all, you know had people new coming in, it is, they knew that there will be times that I will not be here and that I will have to go to house viewing or everything and you know, they were very accommodated of that. I think that that is _ does as well. You need to give some, I would say slack, but it is not slack. You just have to be understanding that these things take time.
- Interviewer : Did, how do you wish did I Price help you, because, for you, an adjustment in I Price was not, I mean in Malaysia, wasn't that- that new. I mean there was a bit here and there, but it was not that, you know huge for you. So, how do you think, to compliment that adjustment that I Price going to help you with?

Participant 9 : I think the few good things I Price does is that it connects you within the slack group. It connects you with the people- do not get me wrong; we do many things right.

Interviewer : Yeah *laughs*

Participant 9 : *Laughs*. Um, I, I did not mean it in that sense right. Um, you do many things right, and I think those are good things too, to, to do right, continue doing. Um, I think um, an f- I think, we, we should do something like a culture immersion day, or you know, kind of have a handbook, you know a fun thing to say...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 9 : ...‘Okay these are the things in Malaysia, do not be surprised if you see this’ or you know this and that, like, like, like in India if you go, you know, this is in my father’s company which was very much same, they used to have one day on Indian culture and etiquettes right, like eating with hand, and you could say that, do not be alarmed if you see people eating with hand. It is not yucky or anything. You know how it is, right?

Interviewer : Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Participant 9 : It cou- it sounds basic, but it is true. I mean it happens always, you know when my friend, local Malaysia, he is Chinese Malaysian right, and he took us to Nirvana and um, I, of course, seeing a banana leaf wanted to eat with hand, but I started eating with a spoon because I am like, I do not know how he will feel. And they were like ‘Oh do not worry about eating with it, I am, myself want to eat it with a spoon.’ I did not believe him. Then he started eating it with his hand. Then I felt comfortable enough to eat with the hand. You know, like a small example.

Interviewer : Yeah yeah

Participant 9 : But things like this sometimes, on a certain level is okay.

Interviewer : Especially to someone who is coming to Malaysia for the first time...

Participant 9 : Correct.

Interviewer : Or this is the first time...

Participant 9 : In Asia

Interviewer : In an Asian country.

Participant 9 : Yeah

Interviewer : And it makes a lot of...

Participant 9 : Like, to be frank with you, um I might get beaten on this. Hopefully, this never leaks out...

Interviewer : *giggles* no.

- Participant 9 : ...um, but when you know, sometimes Italian Spanish will be like, oh you so different from France, and you are so different from Germany like...
- Interviewer : *Laughs*
- Participant 9 : ...even your language is like, if you can master Italian, you will be able to learn Spanish very quickly...
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 9 : Grammar between France and Span- Spain- Spanish is different, but it is not out of the world different.
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 9 : Right. I mean, you would- really want a different language, yeah maybe okay, German is quite different, but when you are talking about India or Malaysia where you know, Tamil is so different from Mandarin, that is a shift.
- Interviewer : Yeah *Laughs*
- Participant 9 : So, when European say that 'Oh yeah, I have lived abroad' and their abroad could be the UK to Spain which is not abroad (inaudible) the first time, it was a big difference.
- Interviewer : Okay. So, how long, for example you know like, you said that company would have helped you with this kind of information and all right, so, how long do you wish that you could at least obtained this, so that, you know when you come, you feel like 'Okay, I know this because I had enough time to make my preparation and this would not be a problem for me.' So, how long do you wish you have...
- Participant 9 : I think it is usually the first month which is tricky because you have to find the house, you have to- probably do not always have that much cash, or waiting for the first salary. So, for example, when we went to China, we asked for um, three months advance salary, right, because we were, we did not have any means of cash, and when people told us we have to put so much deposit in everything, you will get stress, right.
- Interviewer : Okay.
- Participant 9 : Right. So, the first month is tricky, because getting the house, especially when you have wife and kid the, you know, kid's school, that is insane. That is by far the most important thing for my friends, right.
- Interviewer : Yeah yeah.
- Participant 9 : Um, and then for wife, it is about whether she can adjust to the place or not, right, like my wife is used to it, so she does not complain, but trust me, I know many my friends who are wife complain a lot. My wife is super accommodating like I was

traveling so much and everything, she never said a word. Something she is like 'Hey, you are going again' and that, but she is very accommodative. But...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 9 : ...it is, it is tough. So, like the first month, it is very crucial. I would say the first 20 days, as much as they say the first 20 days your new job is important, the first 20 days in a country is super important.

Interviewer : So, before you left India to go to Shanghai, right, since that is the first one you had an impact, did you receive any kind of training, preparation?

Participant 9 : Nothing. I did not have the time to Google search for anything.

Interviewer : So, blindly, it was blind...

Participant 9 : You have no idea what a shock it was. My father had been to China, so he knew food was an issue. But, my father very nicely told me if you want to eat chicken and all that is fine with me, but my mother heard it, and she is like, "Are you crazy?"
Laughs

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 9 : But what I am trying to say is I came actually with an open mind of eating chicken and do not know what if it is going to be so bad, because you do not know anything. All I thought- I knew was Shanghai was this massive city and everything. So, I thought, Mumbai is a metropolitan city, and you know, I see foreigners here and there, we all speak English. I assumed that language would not be a problem. When we landed over there-like I, of course, a couple of days we went on Google, it is a lot like we did not try it...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 9 : ...but Google is not over there, and, right, so the information you had was everything was in Mandarin and stuff, and stuff, like, it was not that easy, and also you cannot digest everything until you are there. So, when the driver picks- luckily, we asked, for example, like the driver to come and pick us up, we asked the company to arrange for a vehicle. He did not speak a word of English. But if you go to most of the countries, like at least in India, because that is where I used to see right, for the first time. All the um drivers from Hilton or all these brands, they spoke amazing English. So, I used to the thing, we, oh, we have a limousine driver picking us up, he will...

Interviewer : Limousine?

Participant 9 : He did not have a word to speak. And we are going to an address which is called unit number 7. In India, the unit number means

like a working factory, and in my head is like 'where are we going, are we living like in a factory area or what'... You know stupid things, but...

Interviewer : Yeah yeah yeah

Participant 9 : ...it is in your head. It was that crazy.

Interviewer : Wow, okay. So, when you fr-, when you arrived, now coming to Malaysia, so, when you arrived in Malaysia, did you receive any kind of like training or preparation, or ...

Participant 9 : But I think...

Interviewer : ...was it like experience...

Participant 9 : ...you guys shared enough information. I think Tanya was there at that time.

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 9 : I think one of the good things we do is all the, you know, preparatory email and, you know stuff like, 'Hey, here is the office, and here is that,' and things like 'you can come from the airport.' Like, that is excellent information. To be fr- to be frank, I mean, that is the thing right, when you get it, you take it for granted, but those are very valuable information, so...Just to add some ideas, it would be great if you could provide temporary accommodation to expatriates as apart of their relocation benefits. To be honest, it would be really helpful and they ... you know, do not have to worry about finding a place to stay once they are here. Butt, this is just my thoughts ... no pressure, yea ...

Interviewer : Do you...

Participant 9 : I do not think...

Interviewer : You...

Participant 9 : We got that before...

Interviewer : Do you think that one needs this kind of training and preparation to adjust?

Participant 9 : I think so.

Interviewer : And if yes, what do feel that, you know, okay, for I Price, you know we have a lot of new people come in the right.

Participant 9 : Correct.

Interviewer : Most of them, 80% is expatriates

Participant 9 : Yeah

Interviewer : And some of them, this is the first time for them even to work abroad. So, what do you think that I Price should have, like if

let us say we do a handbook, what kind of information do you feel that it make super useful in terms of cultural challenges?

Participant 9 : I think it should be an introduction to Malaysia and you should go everything from 'Hey you know this country has this three big communities, this is the demographic of the country, these are...' like you know, not boring, but big enough so people understand that not everybody that looks like Chinese is Chinese. Like I know people who come to Malaysia for the first time, and then, you know, they call the Chinese, or you are an Indian and...teaching the expatriates the do's and do not live in Malaysia...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 9 : ...assume many things, but like, you are not right. (Phone vibrates) Just pick it up. *Pause* So, so you know like stuff like that, you know, something on the food, something on the house rate, like you know, simple stuff like, you know, typically agents will charge you 30% like you know the the the landlord will pay for the agent, but you know, giving the link for rental such as iProperty will help so much. You can have like, kind of a small thing and you can share it, and you can tell me like 'Guys, feel free to use it,' right. Take them out for a banana leaf lunch or a Chinese lunch one day, or go to the food court and you know, instead of having lunch over here, take them out and be like 'Hey, this is what you do' basically making them taste and try the food. Maybe not on the first day...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 9 : ...first week. Small little things like that. I think it is good. You know Interviewer, I think the hard part is, when you do it, not everybody... It is like oxygen, you take it for granted, and that is, it is unavailable right.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 9 : So, for me, I feel like you guys do a good job here. Um, I should not take away that credit at all. Um, and um I think you can only do a better job, um I think the housing part I, I generally feel it is, I mean it could be our company constraints, we do not have that much cash, and it will add to the cost significantly because 80% is... but, you know we can also um...

Interviewer : Handbook would not, you know...

Participant 9 : Handbook is, okay, right, yeah.

Interviewer : It will, and it doesn't, it just needs the bit of like making the information. It will be useful and available for them whenever they want it, get it, they can just get it right.

Participant 9 : Correct.

- Interviewer : Yeah. Is there anything that you like to add to this topic.
- Participant 9 : But, you know, culture, I would just say that every culture is unique at the same time there are commonalities. So, work towards understanding the differences and finding the commonalities, but at the same time, do not make too many assumptions. The trick is, like somebody like me, after having lived in 4 countries, I might assume after I move to another country, 'oh yeah, this is how it works,' but I might be proven wrong.
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 9 : So, you still have to be culturally sensitive, um but, but try to break the initial artificial barriers, superficial barriers, and then you realize that there will always be a connection. You have to find the connection if you want to live in that country and enjoy it.
- Interviewer : Wow, okay. That is super good, Participant 9. I seriously got to admit, and it was much information, to be honest.



Participant 10

- Interviewer : So um, Participant 10 thanks for the yes. So, I am just going to go very quickly to this. So, your word, what is cross- cross-cultural issues mean for you, like in your definition?
- Participant 10 : Oh okay. I guess cross-cultural issues um, *pause* yeah, it would be like *pause* things like that- because of the culture or the differences in the culture, you are like it is harder to communicate with people you need to communicate with or you are like hugging them to you it is considered as something it is normal, and they think super weird or vice versa.
- Interviewer : Yeah, I would agree with that.
- Participant 10 : You think it is...?
- Interviewer : Yeah, it is, pretty much.
- Participant 10 : ...normal and...
- Interviewer : Yeah, because that is the whole thing, right? You know, you have something that you think is okay...
- Participant 10 : Yeah
- Interviewer : ...and then when it comes to doing it here, and you go like, oh shit, you cannot. *giggles*
- Participant 10 : Yeah
- Interviewer : And we will be going to look at you like weirdly if you do that.
- Participant 10 : Yeah
- Interviewer : I could agree with that. So, are you aware when you first moved to Malaysia that you are going to be facing some, you know issues or some challenges in- from a culture- cross-cultural perspective?
- Participant 10 : Yeah, I heard in (inaudible) yeah.
- Interviewer : Was it the first time for you to move to, um to another country?
- Participant 10 : Yeah
- Interviewer : It was the first time, but you did not...
- Participant 10 : I mean, I did not think about it...
- Interviewer : You did not think about?
- Participant 10 : ...that much.
- Interviewer : Are you like a... (both speaks) are you like a very cool person, like, you are like, 'yeah, let us go for this adventure'?
- Participant 10 : I may now, *giggles*
- Interviewer : Ha, I see *giggles*. Okay, so, when you first came to Malaysia, there was like, a year...
- Participant 10 : Yeah
- Interviewer : ...ago, right? So, what kind of cultural challenges did you faced?
- Participant 10 : Um, I mean there is definitely like in the kitchens, yeah, still there is.
- Interviewer : Like, can you give some examples?
- Participant 10 : Um, like a really specific example.
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 10 : ...sometimes I order- get a sandwich...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 10 : ...and I am standing right there, and I say, 'Oh, I want too...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 10 : ...and the guy said, 'oh you want two I just think- I, I am saying to myself I want...

Interviewer : That

Participant 10 : ...that, as well as my sandwich.

Interviewer : Oh *laughs*.

Participant 10 : So, that kind of thing.

Interviewer : Okay, all right.

Participant 10 : If I talk to grab drivers, I have to say 'go right' like ten times before they get 'oh so you need to go right, not left.'

Interviewer : So, you, you kind of like not- instead of just saying go right, you know, you kind of like show them where is right...

Participant 10 : Yeah yeah.

Interviewer : ...so, then they will take the right turn.

Participant 10 : Yeah, it is just like- I think some people are not fluent in English. They just know Bahasa can communicate easily, so.

Interviewer : Is there anything else that you faced like besides the language barrier?

Participant 10 : Um, *pause* not really. I mean, I think the worst part I *pause* kind of living in sort of the more urban environment where people are, I mean it is not like the countryside or village. Really in the heart of Malaysian culture, it is more of international culture.

Interviewer : So, how long did it take for you too, I mean, you have been here for like a year, are you still having the language trouble?

Participant 10 : Yeah yeah.

Interviewer : You still...?

Participant 10 : I mean, the language thing, yeah. Other troubles, um *pause*, um not really.

Interviewer : Like compared to the first time and now, how is the percentage? Like then, it was 100% damn it was a challenge, now it is like maybe 50% reduced, or it is just like, you know no difference seriously.

Participant 10 : Maybe 20% reduced. But it is not that big of a challenge. Really. Coming here- because most people here actually do speak a decent amount of English. So, I think now, relative to them, I recognize when people do not understand what I said more often, and so I am quicker to like explain it differently or try to repeat myself few times or something like using sign language

Interviewer : Okay. So, um, I know you do not have a spouse or a kid, so let us skip that. So, what was the platform or the support system that you used to adjust to Malaysia? That means was it through friends, prior experience, or did you do research or read up about this, or Malaysia just popped in your dream, and you just decided to fly to Malaysia for an, you know like, how, how did you...?

Participant 10 : Yeah, um, I, I guess it was friends. I mean, there was like Participant 10 and Stan. I can communicate with them, like talking to them, it is like their perspective of stuff, so it is easier to...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 10 : ...it sort of bridges the gap, so you know this- the was Malaysia is like the norm everywhere.

Interviewer : Yeah yeah

Participant 10 : It is kind of a weird thing that people in Malaysia...

Interviewer : *Laughs* Okay. So, did I Price helped you in adjustment?

Participant 10 : Yeah, definitely. I mean, it is so multi-cultural...

Interviewer : So, the environment itself helped you?

Participant 10 : Yeah

Interviewer : Okay. So, in terms of culture, you are from the US, a culture that is more westernized, and in Malaysia, it is more a different culture. So, did you feel that differences, was it such a gap that it was a struggle for you?

Participant 10 : No. I, I do not understand that much. I mean, I do get that people here are connected to their families, I guess. It seems like a lot of older people like the young adult, I guess, with their family still. It happens in the US in certain areas.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 10 : I I mean I still know people with their parents, because it is more affordable. Even like, as parents in the US get older, sometimes they will be with their family, like with their kids.

Interviewer : So, it is not much of a- I mean the locals have the understanding that in western culture, that once you turn 18, you get kicked out. Not kicked out, but your parents will encourage you to like to get your place to stay.

Participant 10 : Might not be like- or maybe some people that is the experience, but for me, it is like, okay, you are graduating high school, so now you go off to college and going off to college kind of means that you leave your hometown. Like it is probably not right down the road.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 10 : It is probably like in another state, or 5 hours' drive away or something like that. So, you kind of like a disconnect from your parents, and you go to the new social sphere that is kind of dominated by people by your age.

Interviewer : Okay. So, did you wish for the company? I Price provided you any sort of information that would have been useful for you.

Participant 10 : Oh yeah

Interviewer : *Laughs* Such as what?

Participant 10 : I do not know. It is more information, so why not. *giggles*

Interviewer : *Laughs* So, what do you wish that the information would con- should consist of?

Participant 10 : Um...

Interviewer : Should we give you training? I mean if you like, we will go to training, it will be interesting.

Participant 10 : It will be interesting.

Interviewer : Yeah, it will be interesting. Like a crash course, right?

Participant 10 : Yeah yeah, that will be cool.

Interviewer : Okay, all right.

Participant 10 : Actually, one thing I was thinking would happen here is the whole business card thing where um, like at least in Japan, you know the person, their business card, or China, I guess Eastern Asian countries...

Interviewer : All right.

Participant 10 : And it is like a really formal thing; you have to take their business card and look at it and bow and 'thank you,' you know and show that you put it away somewhere safe. It is often owned by only high position individuals.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 10 : That is, I um...

Interviewer : That is it *laughs*.

Participant 10 : I think one guy gave me his business card, and I was like, should I do it?

Interviewer : Okay, that is interesting, in any case. *laughs* So, um, this kind of information right, so how long do you wish you knew this, like do you wish I Price should have given to you this like a month ago, before you come to Malaysia or you know, when I am in Malaysia then you bang me with all those information. How long do you wish you get this?

Participant 10 : Probably before I landed. I am kind of not the person that is freaked out for not having a perfect understanding of the environment that I am going into. So, I do not really- I, I, do not feel like its missing. Maybe stuff like where should I rent out an apartment, you know, what is the reasonable price for an apartment. That kind of stuff that you cannot find anywhere.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 10 : That would be kind of interesting, but other than that- I, I mean like knowing the city, or where the cool places, what does everyone do in the weekend. But generally, I think Price is good at that cause you know if a new person joins, it seems like usually we all kind of go out together, show each other around, that kind of thing.

Interviewer : Yeah, you start mingling and asking questions...

Participant 10 : Yeah.

Interviewer : So, in training. Now, before you left the US, right, did you receive any sort of preparation or training before coming to Malaysia?

Participant 10 : Oh, vaccinations.

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 10 : Oh, that is...

Interviewer : Vaccination? That is it? *laughs*.

Participant 10 : Yeah

Interviewer : Okay. And, hospital, and it did not cost you, and *laughs* but, who told you that you are supposed to get a vaccination?

Participant 10 : Um, nobody.

Interviewer : Did you take that on yourself?

Participant 10 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. So, when you came to Malaysia, did you receive anything else, like preparation, sort of...?

Participant 10 : Um, *pause* um it would be cool if I would know how to do taxes.

Interviewer : I will do with that later *Laughs*.

Participant 10 : Still confused.

Interviewer : You are still confused. Yeah, I will get that on for you. But yeah, taxes was one of the things, I mean-

Participant 10 : Yeah, I guess, I guess, I mean we are like a younger company, and usually, we hire younger people to do taxes. I guess it is like such a big deal, but it is kind of hard to figure it out on your own. Like...providing a simpler and understandable version of tax information rather than providing them the full information which can be ... hmm slightly confusing

Interviewer : Did you get information about your tax when you, before you came to Malaysia?

Participant 10 : No.

Interviewer : No. And did you?

Participant 10 : No, I did not actually. There is a person that does mine. She like, figured it out for me. I did not know what to...

Interviewer : Oh okay. So, you wished that you know somebody would have at least informed you...

Participant 10 : Yeah, stuff like that. Um, there is also like healthcare in the US that I am not sure.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 10 : And then I know like there is healthcare here, but I am not 100% sure how to use it. I have not used it. I guess some information on the pricing and types of the package we can sign for would be helpful.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 10 : Um, I signed up for a little thing.

Interviewer : Okay. So, um, do you feel, um putting yourself as a first timer in Malaysia...

Participant 10 : Yeah

Interviewer : Do you think it made sense if I Price, you know, provide you with some kind of cultural, training, or preparation, you know that you feel will be super useful?

Participant 10 : Maybe, but my fear will be the, it is like totally overblown.

Interviewer : Overblown? No! I mean...

Participant 10 : I mean, what if you say that this is the traditional dress in Malaysia...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 10 : And the next day, the advice team, with those white shirts, and the skirt thingy.

Interviewer : Okay, *laughs* the sarong.

Participant 10 : Yeah, the sarong.

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 10 : It might, and it might give them the wrong perception of you know, kind of like what is the modern Malaysian culture.

Interviewer : So, more like a modern Malaysian...?

Participant 10 : I mean, yeah, for me, it is hard to find where the cultural differences are. What do you think?

Interviewer : I mean for me, being in a city, with that um technology being that drive, we do not see the differences here. We do not see people walking in a mall with traditional attire.

Participant 10 : Yeah

Interviewer : We see people with jeans and a t-shirt. I mean, it is an educational purpose. You do not walk in a mall with a bikini.

Participant 10 : Yeah

Interviewer : So, you know, you do not do that. It is just that locals tend to have that um misjudgment with the US, you know with those western people, they think that 'oh these people are just going to show off their cleavage, they are going to show off their bras'...

Participant 10 : *Laughs*

Interviewer : ...You look surprised! There is always this group of local people that are open-minded and their itself they have ventured into countries, and there is this group of locals that would be like 'oh god what is she wearing.'

Participant 10 : It is the Participant 10e in the US.

Interviewer : Is it the Participant 10e?

Participant 10 : Yeah, of course. Some people never left their hometown, and some people travel too many countries around the world.

Interviewer : So, that- I feel like that opens up a lot of how you see things.

Participant 10 : Yeah totally.

Interviewer : Yeah, so, in terms of culture, I think maybe if once you go in-depth, I mean if you have your family based here, so you can see the cultural difference.

Participant 10 : Yeah

Interviewer : But if you are here alone...

Participant 10 : Yeah, I, I do not see it.

Interviewer : You do not see it.

Participant 10 : I, I do. I have gone on holiday. I notice it. Like you have that Chinese New Year. It is cool to kind of be the part of, have other people to invite you to their party and stuff.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 10 : You kind of get a sense of 'oh this is sort of, you know, their tradition'...

Interviewer : Tradition.

Participant 10 : ...and that is the cool part of it.

Interviewer : Okay. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Participant 10 : Um, I do not know. I think like seeing the historical stuff around. You can get some sense of where the culture comes from...

Interviewer : The history background?

Participant 10 : Yeah yeah yeah

Interviewer : Would you feel it would benefit if like, let us say when you first come in, I Price give you like a, like a, a handbook of like 'Hey this is Malaysian culture, we have several cultures here,' and you have like the historical background you know, we were colonized by these people, and we got independence on this day.

Participant 10 : *Giggles* Yeah, I mean that would give you some context on why Malaysia has too many holidays.

Interviewer : Yeah, Malaysia has the most holidays *giggles*. Okay

Participant 10 : I think that would be a good idea.

Interviewer : Okay. Because I am creating a handbook.

Participant 10 : Okay. There could be like a 'these are the traditional dishes,' 'if you want to save some money, you go to this food court.' This is not on the map, but you can get it like in 5 Ringgit.

Interviewer : Yeah *laughs*

Participant 10 : Okay, okay, that is a great input thought. I agree with that. Thank you, Participant 10.

Interviewer : Is that it?

Participant 10 : Yeah.



Participant 11

- Interviewer : Okay, um, on the question, thank you for saying yes.
- Participant 11 : No worries.
- Interviewer : So, in your own words, what is cross-cultural issues, defines for you?
- Participant 11 : The issue?
- Interviewer : Yeah, what does it mean for you?
- Participant 11 : Um, let us, let me mention a bit, I mean, an issue which means kind of the conflict yet or not. It is conflict, right?
- Interviewer : Yes.
- Participant 11 : All right. So, some people maybe got some problem that, maybe the thing different when they meet up with the person that not the same as them, which is different races, different cultures, countries, whatever. So, I am not sure that if they were together, maybe study together, if it got or they meet some point that their opinion is not matching...
- Interviewer : Mhm
- Participant 11 : What do they think about how to solve that issue, which might be some of them...
- Interviewer : Mhm
- Participant 11 : ... think that...
- Interviewer : Mhm
- Participant 11 : ...I mean, it is not thought that; they used that culture, which is different from them to make a decision.
- Interviewer : Yeah
- Participant 11 : Versus they are wrong or right, or maybe, kind of that.
- Interviewer : Okay.
- Participant 11 : Yeah, that is my own, opinion *laughs*
- Interviewer : *Laughs* no worries. I mean, it is your definition, which is good. So, are you aware that when you move from... you are from?
- Participant 11 : Thailand
- Interviewer : Thailand, right.
- Participant 11 : Mhm.

Interviewer : So, when you move from Thailand to Malaysia, are you aware that you are going to face some cultural issues?

Participant 11 : Um, I am study Master here...

Interviewer : Oh okay.

Participant 11 : So *laughs*

Interviewer : So...? *laughs*

Participant 11 : *Laughs*

Interviewer : Was it a problem for you, then?

Participant 11 : Yeah, but um, it, which is I am studying about Southeast Asia study.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : So, I study here for like three years, and a half, which is all of the the the conflict might be happening, but do you think that I have heard from my friend, but it is not in my class. Because of my class, we are actually from a very different culture, which is someone from Finland.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : Yes, just like western culture. Japan, almost the same. I mean, we never- I am not sure, but for me, um I have not to experience because I have been here.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : So, which is I know, here, here is quite like, quite how to... yeah many, many races here, which is for me, not a problem. *giggles*

Interviewer : Okay. So, when you moved from Thailand to Malaysia when you first studied, that means, going back three years...?

Participant 11 : Yeah

Interviewer : Three years ago. So, do you know you are going to face some issues?

Participant 11 : Um, for me, I never, based on my experience...

Interviewer : Yes, on your experience.

Participant 11 : I have never think about that.

Interviewer : Never think about that. So, you just, when you applied for...

Participant 11 : Just flow with everything.

Interviewer : So, you just accept to be flexible and all.

Participant 11 : Mhm

Interviewer : Okay. So, when you moved to Malaysia, that means when you are studying, you know, you are going to move to study in Malaysia and all. Were there any issues you faced?

Participant 11 : Um, for me, no, but le for, I have my friend study MBA

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : She is from um Palestine.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : Um, some, she shared some of her experiences that to be the reason that she needs to be here...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : ...which is her husband and her children.

Interviewer : Mhm.

Participant 11 : Someone might no understand um, her clearly

Interviewer : okay

Participant 11 : Maybe she says that some of her friends were trying to ask her about why do not you go back because they might think that she and her family will be some effect here.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : That is it that she says that she does not want to be any problem here. She just wants to have a place to stay in like...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : ...peaceful...

Interviewer : Peaceful...

Participant 11 : No war or no anything that, she... she just wants to stay. I mean she just, then she also studies.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 11 : So, yeah

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : But um she said that it is not much, actually, that friend that you mentioned is also from the middle east.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : Which is, she also does not understand why he does not understand her. Because let us say they came from a very similar area, I guess.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 11 : Which is that area quite has a problem.

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 11 : Maybe like three years ago. So, she just questions to me, I say you just, you just, okay take care of your children and then you just study and stop thinking too much. Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay, so how long f- I mean for you, how long did it take for you to overcome you know, you said that you did not have any issues?

Participant 11 : Yeah, seriously...

Interviewer : Like not even one?

Participant 11 : Um, yeah, because I am not sure, um, let us say, I mentioned about like my professor, um my lecturer or my friend who are f- come from Thailand, and they said: "(speaks in Thai), Oh I love Thai food."

Interviewer : Oh *giggles*

Participant 11 : I *giggles*, and I like too. We said Thailand and then, and then, they said about the middle east of the place, say that. Yeah, seriously, because let us say if I have, I will show you for sure.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 11 : Yeah

Interviewer : Okay. All right. So, you do not have any spouse and kids, right?

Participant 11 : No, no, I am single.

Interviewer : You are single. Okay. So, what was the platform, or that means, so when you moved to Malaysia right, so you applied for a university, you want to study here. What was it, so, how did you know about Malaysia? Um, that means when you want to move to Malaysia, like want to know where you want to stay, accommodation, you know? So, how did you do it? Was it through friends, or was it through like family...

Participant 11 : For the first time...

Interviewer : ...or research?

Participant 11 : ...um, um, which is I decide to study here, actually during my first degree, I have visit UM, um UM before.

Interviewer : All right

Participant 11 : So, they got some major that can, can be related to my study at that time. So, um some of the lecturers at UM suggest to me if you interest...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : ...you can apply for, and they got me a like a book, a handbook of whatever of their, they are major. Yeah and then I hear um, um it is quite interesting

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 11 : And then while when I move, I face out like, because, um they also...being that the lecturer or whatever, but for the finding the place or whatever I do my work.

Interviewer : You did your own?

Participant 11 : Yes.

Interviewer : Okay. So, it was your research...?

Participant 11 : Yes yes.

Interviewer : So how long did it take for you, um- sorry. Okay, so, how was that means for you it is a college, right? So, how did the college helped you in that adjustment process? Because you said, you were finding, you know, through yourself right.

Participant 11 : Aha

Interviewer : So, did the college helped you?

Participant 11 : No.

Interviewer : No?

Participant 11 : Yes.

Interviewer : The college did not do anything?

Participant 11 : They just, um, they suggested to me the dormitory, but which is that time my friend suggest to me, not the college.

Interviewer : So, the college did not do anything?

Participant 11 : Yes

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : Just prepare for me studies

Interviewer : Wow, okay. So, for you to adjust in Malaysia, so, how what, you know when you do before, you did research. When you come to Malaysia, what did you do? Is it through your friends? Or was it, again, you did the research? Or did you like to get yourself inside the culture...

Participant 11 : I get myself. I get myself. I try everything. I have been everywhere. Like maybe the thing that I never been before. I try every food. Anythings.

Interviewer : Okay, so you are, that means, are you like a very flexible person?

Participant 11 : Yes.

Interviewer : So, you are okay to try things, to learn...

Participant 11 : Yes, yes. I do not mind anything.

Interviewer : Okay. So, was there anything that made it hard for you?

Participant 11 : No.

Interviewer : No?

Participant 11 : Mhm

Interviewer : Because it was easy for you? *Laughs*

Participant 11 : *Laughs* Not easy, because I, I just thinking that I can learn to accept it.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 11 : Which is um, maybe I, I will not agree, but I can accept it. You know what I mean?

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 11 : Ah, yeah.

Interviewer : So, when you come to I Price, did you wished that the company or I Price would have helped you to adjust?

Participant 11 : To adjust?

Interviewer : Like maybe helped you, as you know, your college did not help you.

Participant 11 : Ah, ah.

Interviewer : So, you did everything...

Participant 11 : Oh. Oh yeah, my team lead, my team lead, ask me for the... Oh yeah, I got the email, to prepare, to come, right?

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 11 : Yeah, I got an email like where to stay, all the list there, the place there. I think it is helping me a lot. But, let us say um, let us say I- let us say for because I have the place already in here. But let us say even a new one, I never came before, it is really helpful.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 11 : Yeah. That email.

Interviewer : Is there anything you somehow wish, if, let us say if it is new for you...

Participant 11 : Aha aha

Interviewer : Is there anything that you wished, like 'I wished the company did this one extra for me'?

Participant 11 : For me may- um, maybe, I think the place you also offer right. I mean the list, maybe...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 11 : And then, I think *long pause* because last time based on my experience, I think the most difficult thing in here is a place to stay.

Interviewer : Okay. Accommodation.

Participant 11 : Yeah, but you prepare the list already with landlords' contact details. So, maybe you can, you can email them directly, 'Is there, you can find already or not' or even providing the reliable website to look for.

Interviewer : Ah, so to follow up?

Participant 11 : Yeah yeah yeah. Because others I think they can do their own, but the place to stay is the most important one here, I guess. Yeah. Not I guess la, my experience *giggles*.

Interviewer : It is your experience. *giggles* So when you say- you said accommodation is important.

Participant 11 : Mhm

Interviewer : If- for you, you wanted that help. How long do you wish like, for example, okay today, you know you are going to move to Malaysia? It is your first time you are going to Malaysia. So how long do you wish the company or the college would have provided that information?

Participant 11 : Let us say, um today I just know I pass and I got a job, um, and then after that, it will be visa progress right. Usually, it is like three weeks waiting. I think the following weeks.

Interviewer : The following weeks...

Participant 11 : Yeah

Interviewer : ...is it just nice for you?

Participant 11 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. All right. So, cross-cultural training. So, in this right, before you left your country, that means Thailand, did you receive any training or any preparation, anything... about the Malaysian culture? I know Thailand and Malaysia are just bordered.

Participant 11 : *Laughs* yeah.

Interviewer : Because the language is different

Participant 11 : Mhm

Interviewer : Right?

Participant 11 : Yes

Interviewer : The culture is different

Participant 11 : Yeah

Interviewer : We- you have only one culture; here you have many cultures. So, was there any training given to you?

Participant 11 : Which is, um, it is not kind of training because I have 1 class in my degree, which is like, study about Southeast Asia. We need to know all the countries around here, just like languages, or like food, culture, and religion, everything.

Interviewer : So, you learned everything in a course?

Participant 11 : Yes

Interviewer : That, interesting.

Participant 11 : Yeah, like a course there.

Interviewer : Okay. So, that means it was incorporated in your college education in Thailand?

Participant 11 : Yes

Interviewer : So, you learned all this?

Participant 11 : Yes

Interviewer : Okay, um, so I think it was pas- paid under your fee, college fee, and everything, right?

Participant 11 : *Giggles* yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. So, um after arriving in Malaysia, you came to college, you started your first week in college and all. So, um, what kind of training did your college give you, or anything about the culture... you know was there training or preparation?

Participant 11 : Usually, I think this is quite helpful, my friend and my last time because it just like automatically be because one of my Malaysian friends is my classmate. They- um he brought us around Malaysia, even Malacca, because it is his hometown.

Interviewer : Oh

Participant 11 : And then brought us to Klang to have Bak Ku Teh, kind of sharing...

Interviewer : Yeah yeah yeah

Participant 11 : Yeah, and then I know more because, of course, at that first time starting, I just am only in KL.

Interviewer : Okay. If you want to compare research, or you know, um training or to have a local tour guide, which is the easiest?

Participant 11 : The local...

Interviewer : The local tour guide?

Participant 11 : Yeah, the people there, like maybe we have like, we, we study together, so we get close together...

Interviewer : So you became a friend...

Participant 11 : Yeah... (both talking)

Interviewer : Okay, so now putting yourself as a first-timer coming to a new country, do you think it is important for them to have a cross-cultural training, you know, to adjust to a new environment?

Participant 11 : For me, it is in their background.

Interviewer : Background. Why do you say that?

Participant 11 : Because I think everybody has a different meaning for the cross-culture. I am not sure, but the one that I understand, the cross-culture, they will be willing to accept everybody, not just know everything, but there got somebody that also the background quite different. They do not want to learn, or they just everything by themselves. This will be- that one, I, I think I need to, but usually, they will not tell anyone, right?

Interviewer : Yeah, that is true.

Participant 11 : *Giggles*

Interviewer : So, you noticed that Price had given you some information, right? Like in your welcome email...

Participant 11 : Aha yes, yes

Interviewer : ...and then before you come, they give you a whole...

Participant 11 : Yes yes yes

Interviewer : ...copy, groceries, and everything.

Participant 11 : Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer : So, do you think anything else that may be expatriate could have helped you more with it?

Participant 11 : For me, at that time, because I also think that I, as I mention, I mentioned a new one...like the do's and did not here cause although uh... I received it in Thailand, but there can be...

like ... small changes and differences... so, I think it is... important...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 11 : ...I think that one is very helpful, and then let us say that is completely fine...

Interviewer : Yes

Participant 11 : ...for the beginning...

Interviewer : Mhm

Participant 11 : ...but let us say if, if they already start maybe the first day working, or the second day, you can ask them, just like follow-up.

Interviewer : Just like follow-up.

Participant 11 : Is everything fine? Is the register helpful? Or yeah, I think if they, ver- very new, they might follow that one, because they need, they did not know...

Interviewer : Anything?

Participant 11 : Yes

Interviewer : Was language hard for you here?

Participant 11 : Mmm

Interviewer : Because of the form of Thai background, and then you come to Malaysia...

Participant 11 : Um, for communication not really, but because I am studying my Masters here *giggles* *deep breath* even the theory one, you need to reach the theory in English, the academy in English.

Interviewer : *Laughs*

Participant 11 : *Laughs* Even actually my one, when my I also not really... *giggles*

Interviewer : I understand.

Participant 11 : Yeah, but for academics, yes. But, in here um, because maybe I use, I use my working as a Thai, but some system, or English system for the meeting, not really...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : I can like to say um, learning, and improving during um, the time being.

Interviewer : Okay. Is there anything else that you would like to add on?

Participant 11 : *Long pause* Yeah, I just um, to say again that, it is filed us say um, if they got a new company, yeah, it is, it is bet- it is, it is will make them feel very safe, maybe if you follow up them, yeah...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 11 : Yeah, because they very new here and then like, they never be before, it is quite important for them...

Interviewer : Okay. Completely agree.

Participant 11 : Yeah *giggles*

Interviewer : Thank you so much!

Participant 11 : No worries! Thank you so much!



Participant 12

- Interviewer : All right, so, um, in your word, what are cross-cultural issues?
- Participant 12 : The cross-cultural issues, um, maybe sometimes um, people would misunderstand each other because the culture is different right. Sometimes what do you do in your culture is my, has a different meaning in our country.
- Interviewer : That is true.
- Participant 12 : Yeah.
- Interviewer : So, when you say cul- cultural, cross-cultural issues, like what-what kind of issues comes to your head?
- Participant 12 : Issues? Um, as I say, misunderstanding, um communication, then, maybe people fear.
- Interviewer : Okay. So, are you aware that you might face cross-cultural issues when you move to Malaysia?
- Participant 12 : Yes, I know that Malaysia has people from different um cultures.
- Interviewer : Yeah, so did you face any cross-cultural issues when you move to Malaysia.?
- Participant 12 : 1 time
- Interviewer : What was it?
- Participant 12 : Like um... When I said something in Vietnamese, it supposed to be positive...
- Interviewer : Okay
- Participant 12 : ...then the people um, receive the message with the different meaning.
- Interviewer : Oh, like how?
- Participant 12 : I did not notice when it happened, then when I think it over later...
- Interviewer : So, you said something...
- Participant 12 : Yeah
- Interviewer : ...which in a Vietnam context is different...
- Participant 12 : Yeah
- Interviewer : ...but then in the Malaysian context, it was different?
- Participant 12 : Um yeah. Not the Malaysian context, it is another country context.

Interviewer : Okay, so how long did you, did it, did it take for you to overcome it?

Participant 12 : Um, what does it mean?

Interviewer : Overcome means, let us say assuming um you had like just you said language...

Participant 12 : Yeah

Interviewer : ...some of the language issues, right? How long did it take for you to like, to solve it... to say that "Okay, I no longer have language issues" or "I understand Malaysian culture."

Participant 12 : Um okay, so, I like um, when I thought of our conversation two days ago, and then I realize I might affect, then, what I um was like a, try to get in touch with that people more frequently, like solving the problem by getting um to know each other like that, by communicating more frequent.

Interviewer : By communicating more frequently?

Participant 12 : Yeah

Interviewer : So how long have you been living in Malaysia?

Participant 12 : Six months I guess.

Interviewer : Six months already?

Participant 12 : Yeah

Interviewer : So six months in Malaysia, do you think like, you are like, okay in the cultural topic or you feel like you are still struggling a bit?

Participant 12 : I think it is okay.

Interviewer : Is it okay?

Participant 12 : Yeah

Interviewer : Compared to the first month, you were here?

Participant 12 : Yeah

Interviewer : As the first month, it was like, if percentage-wise, how many percents?

Participant 12 : Um, like um a 60 percent negative.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 12 : And yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. So now six months already, so how many percent negative.

Participant 12 : Um like, when I, it is a, like, 70, 80 percentage...

Interviewer : Better?

Participant 12 : Yeah

Interviewer : Better right?

Participant 12 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. So the next one is, so I think you do not have a spouse and kid in Malaysia.

Participant 12 : Um

Interviewer : Do you have a wife here?

Participant 12 : Um not yet.

Interviewer : Not yet. *Laughs* That is the answer.

Participant 12 : *Laughs.

Interviewer : Okay. So, let us see now what t is the support system the did you used to adjust Malaysia. Meaning, was it through friends or was it because you have moved or you have worked in other countries before, so you know the experience. Or was it like self-learning? What support or what platform you used to adjust Malaysia?

Participant 12 : Um, like um, I have friends, used to work here...

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 12 : Then, first of all, I asked him about the living cost, the taxi cost. Then the way people, um people here.

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 12 : So, I did a little research online. Yeah.

Interviewer : All right. So, for example, you said your friends, they gave you some information, right? So was the information provided by your friend was it correct, like similar to whatever, let us say now you are in Malaysia, right?

Participant 12 : Yeah

Interviewer : So when you reflect whatever your friends say it is it like the same or was it like outdated or was it like, you know whatever he or she says just wrong, and you just had to suffer for a while and then go on.

Participant 12 : I think the- just one information is, is a bit outdated.

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 12 : Like tax sometimes, right?

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 12 : You have tax sometimes, its um change frequently.

Interviewer : Oh, so that was outdated. Okay.

Participant 12 : Yeah

Interviewer : So, has your company helped you in the adjustment process? Did I price helped you when you wanted to move to Malaysia? Did I Price helped you with anything?

Participant 12 : Um, you guys gave, um gave me quite detailed information about the tax, um yes.

Interviewer : So, in general, okay, you have answered this question. You did some research, right?

Participant 12 : Yeah

Interviewer : So, was the research accurate? Like when, when you did your research about the living everything so when you came here, it was like yes, it is e- it was exactly what homework you did, and it is the same. Is it the same?

Participant 12 : That is what I did an um the information is much accurate, accurate 100%, right. Because it also depends on the purpose, it is um people's perspective.

Interviewer : Yeah.

Participant 12 : And yeah, I already prepare for, for the somehow you call it?

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 12 : How do you call it?

Interviewer : Like the range?

Participant 12 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. So, how long- So, you did your research, right? So how long before you move to Malaysia you did your research? Was it like one week before you move to Malaysia, or one month, or like a year?

Participant 12 : Like two months after the interview, then I got the letter. Then I did the research.

Interviewer : Okay. So, was there something that made the adjustment difficult? Like, let us say now you want to adjust here, then something made it difficult for you. Was it like personal reasons, or is there anything that made it difficult?

Participant 12 : Um, I do not think so. Like um, I am a person that um, I move a lot even though I get um... by the time I, I live in Ho Chi Minh City, it is like a, once month um travel, and it is like I get used to traveling and...

Interviewer : Okay, so when you say travel around right,

Participant 12 : Okay.

Interviewer : So when you say you travel around right, did the travel experience helped you?

Participant 12 : Yes, it is um helped me a lot.

Interviewer : Did it help you a lot?

Participant 12 : Yeah.

Interviewer : In what way? Like maybe surviving skills or just adjusting to the currency, expense everything? Did it help you?

Participant 12 : Um, like um, every time I travel, I just travel with my bag, even now. When I move from Ho Chi Minh City to Malaysia. So, I do not, I did not carry much personal stuff, so it is very easy to move.

Interviewer : Okay, so, how did you wish I Price could have assisted you in adjustment. Meaning that, what you wish, maybe ABC E-Commerce Company could do more for you when you know, just for, let us say this is the first time you come to Malaysia...

Participant 12 : Mhm

Interviewer : ...What you wished I Price to give you, but we did not give for you.

Participant 12 : The thing, you, you give um, for hood, um preparation like, we got one-week accommodation.

Interviewer : Yes.

Participant 12 : Yeah, but um, one month in, maybe you can um, have um, um you can come, maybe you can suggest the area, good area for a permanent um...list of reliable landlords cause some people will cheat you or website we can look at... yea.

Interviewer : Resident?

Participant 12 : Yeah.

Interviewer : Accommodation?

Participant 12 : Yes.

Interviewer : Okay.

Participant 12 : When information

Interviewer : Okay. So, before you left Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City, did you receive any kind of training, about you know, or training or inf- like um, readings, or maybe some preparations about Malaysian culture or anything?

Participant 12 : I just did my research.

Interviewer : You just did a personal one. Okay. So, that means the cost would have been free for you. You did not have to pay anything for that. Okay. So, when you arrived in Malaysia, did you receive anything else? Like addi- additional training or preparations? Could it be anything?

Participant 12 : No.

Interviewer : No?

Participant 12 : I try to move like, as much as possible. Right now, I do not have my permanent... um yet, um it is just that um I just move around see the some... yeah.*

Interviewer : All right. Yeah. And, personally, do you think, an individual needs a cross-cultural training to adjust in a new environment?

Participant 12 : Yeah, it would be, would help. Especially like um, sometimes you should not know in that culture...

Interviewer : Okay

Participant 12 : ...like, for example, in Malaysia, we have a few cultures, different cultures...

Interviewer : Yeah

Participant 12 : ...yeah, I think...

Interviewer : It would help

Participant 12 : ...yeah.

Interviewer : Meaning like the dos and do not...

Participant 12 : Yeah.

Interviewer : ...cultures and everything. Anything else on top of that?

Participant 12 : Um, that is it.

Interviewer : That is it?

Participant 12 : Yeah

Interviewer : Okay, um, do you like to add anything to this cross-cultural topic?

Participant 12 : Um, maybe if I think of anything I can, I will send you an email.

Interviewer : Okay, yeah, of course, yes, please.

Participant 12 : Or WhatsApp.

Interviewer : Yes, you can just drop me an email if you feel like you want to add anything to this topic. You have the interview questions, so you can just look up and just add in more.

Participant 12 : Yeah.
Interviewer : Awesome. That is it. We are done.
Participant 12 : Thank you.
Interviewer : Yes. Thank you.
Participant 12 : Welcome.

